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Title:
MOTIVATION IN THE CONTEXT OF THE LIFE HISTORY OF VOLUNTEER
COUNSELLORS

by

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the award of the
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DECLARATION

This work has not been previously submitted in whole, or in part, for the award of any degree. It is my own work. Each significant contribution to, and quotation in, this dissertation from the work, or works, of other people has been attributed, and has been cited and referenced

SIGNATURE

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DATE

29th June

University of Cape Town

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ABSTRACT

The ethos behind the psychodynamic approach is that past experiences influence and shape present experiences. The past is seen as playing a pivotal role in life outcomes. This study attempts to trace and explore the factors that shape the current motivations of six volunteer counsellors based at an established counselling organisation. The psychodynamic theory is adopted as the framework to interpret the life stories of the participants. Working within a retrospective and narrative framework the life histories of the volunteers could be explored as the narrative approach emphasises the links that individuals make in describing their life histories. The central focus of the study is on the participants' subjective accounts of their life histories and how they interpret these through their narrative. The interest is in the way the participants' report their stories and how they interpret the factors that have motivated them to become volunteers. This study also wanted to go beyond the narrative by exploring and interpreting the links that the participants were not cognisant of. The interpretivist analysis provided the researcher with a cohesive and in-depth understanding of the participants' life histories. The life experiences were interpreted with reference to how these experiences shaped their motivation to become volunteers. The analysis revealed the link between the past and present lives of the participants as earlier experiences played a significant role in these participants becoming caregivers. Painful and disappointing relationships and traumatic events marred their childhood and adolescent experiences. These past events were intertwined with pain or loss that resonated in their present experiences. Through making the connection between the participants' past and present lives, meaning and value was attached to their experiences.

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INTRODUCTION AND CHAPTER OVERVIEW

What is it that motivates ordinary individuals from society to help strangers with whom they have no connection? Why do such people become involved in the voluntary activity of counselling others?

The current study is an investigation into what we know about individuals who become caregivers. It aims to examine the life histories of the volunteer counsellors by focusing on their descriptions of their experiences and events over the course of their lives. It aims to holistically explore the influences, which have shaped their innate motivation to become caregivers. The possible ways in which the experiences and events in individuals' lives may have contributed towards their current motivations will be examined.

The current research endeavours to discover the subjective meanings individuals ascribe to their lives and their experiences. A rich and detailed account of their experiences will be sought, as the means of understanding how the participants perceive their motivation. The study will provide some understanding of how the context of the individuals' lives may have helped to shape their experiences and motivations.

The study is presented in four chapters. Chapter one consists of a review of relevant literature. Theory and research relating to pertinent domains such as counselling, volunteerism and motivation will be reviewed. The review will provide an extensive discussion on the psychodynamic theory, as this approach will be used as the framework to provide meaning to the life histories of the participants.

In the second chapter the methodology employed in the study is presented and explored. The rationale for adopting a qualitative methodology will be discussed and the choice of the narrative approach will be explored. Details pertaining to the research design are presented, including a discussion on the method of data analysis.

In chapter three, the results of the study will be reported. Findings pertaining to the relationship between the past and present lives of the participants are explored and how this

has played a role in them being caregivers. The factors that have influenced their motivation and decisions to become volunteer counsellors are highlighted.

In chapter four, the findings of the study will be integrated and reviewed. The findings will be compared with other relevant studies. Recommendations are made for improving the quality of counselling that is provided by lay counsellors. Limitations of the study are discussed and recommendations for future research are provided.

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CHAPTER 1:

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

1.1. Introduction

In the literature review, the context of the study will focus on the need for volunteer counselling in South Africa. Voluntary organisations, volunteerism, and counselling will be reviewed as developing in response to this need. In considering what motivates individuals to become volunteer counsellors, different theories of motivation will be explored and an overview of various studies will be provided in this regard. The life history method requires participants to describe past as well present experiences. It is considered that the psychodynamic approach is a valuable and applicable theory to use in order to make sense of these experiences. For this reason, this theory is adopted as a way of seeing how individuals' past experiences may contribute to their present life experiences.

1.2. The Context of the Study

By exploring the state of mental health in South Africa, Oliver (1992) identified the most prominent psychological problems, which arise from psychosocial factors. These were depression, aggression, violence and conflict, tension and stress, distrust of other people, loneliness, insecurity, thoughts of family murder and actual family murder, major psychoses and physical and mental disablement. The socio-economic problems were educational problems, work-related problems, problems related to organisational conflict, marital distress, alcohol and substance abuse, financial problems and teenage problems. Lastly, Oliver (1992) identified sociopolitical problems that individuals are exposed to which also have serious influences on their mental health. The epidemic of HIV/AIDS has also placed a colossal effect on the mental health of its victims. These large-scale mental health demands have placed a burden on the formal mental health care sector, which cannot meet the need that exists. For this reason, the non-professional or lay counselling sector provides a useful vehicle for providing mental health care services to more people.

1.2.1. The Nature of Counselling

The existence of these above-mentioned problems has caused the need for certain measures to be taken and lay counselling has emerged in response to this. The call to volunteer has become louder. Counselling is defined as the process involving an interaction between a counsellor and a client in a private setting, with the aim of helping the client to alter his or her behaviour so that he or she may adequately resolve their needs (Pepinsky & Pepinsky, 1954, cited in Burks & Steffle, 1979). This definition of counselling is applied to both the professional and voluntary setting. The distinction between professional counsellors and lay counsellors is that the latter are not paid for their services. Professional counsellors have received extensive and practical training whereas lay counsellors have received a minimal amount of training in counselling and helping skills. They work on a voluntary basis in environments such as counselling agencies and numerous other voluntary organisations (Nelson-Jones, 1992).

Nelson-Jones (1992) explored numerous definitions of counselling. These are viewing counselling as a relationship, involving a collection of skills, emphasising self-help, accentuating choice and focusing on problems of living. Counselling is a relationship and the emphasis is on the quality of the relationship presented to the client. Features of a good helping relationship are sometimes affirmed as 'non-possessive warmth', genuineness and a receptive understanding of the client's thoughts and emotions (Nelson-Jones, 1992, p. 3). Counselling also incorporates a range of skills, which are interventions that are selectively organised relying upon the needs and states of willingness of clients. These interventions may concentrate on emotions, thoughts and changing behaviour.

Some forms of counselling stress the importance of self-help, which is the central endeavour of helping clients to help themselves. Clients, to a greater or lesser extent, possess problems in taking responsibility for their lives. The perception of individual responsibility is at the core of the process of efficient helping and self-help. Personal responsibility is the process of making decisions that amplify the individual's happiness and fulfillment (Nelson-Jones, 1992). The ethos behind counselling also stresses the importance of choice. It is primarily concerned with the choices required to deal with the different stages of an individual's life span and the progression through these life stages. Lastly, counselling is a process which

signifies movement, flow, and interaction between at least two individuals in which each is influenced by the behaviour of the other (Nelson-Jones, 1992). According to Nelson-Jones (1992) the counsellors' collection of skills incorporates those of establishing an understanding relationship as well as interventions focused on assisting clients to adjust particular aspects of their feelings, thoughts, and behaviours.

According to De Gouveia (1992) counselling involves two essential elements: Firstly, distressed individuals request the help of a counsellor as the interaction between the client and counsellor produces a positive change in the client. Secondly, counselling is not advice-giving despite some counsellors at times wanting to provide advice in a personal capacity. Counselling is intended to permit the client to examine him or herself and to create his or her own insights, decisions and solutions.

An understanding of the process of counselling has been provided. It is deemed imperative to explore mainstream counselling theories in order to provide the organisation's rationale for selecting a particular counselling model. There are numerous theories of counselling such as the existential and humanistic theory, cognitive-behavioural theory, and the psychodynamic theory. The existential and humanistic theories of counselling are based upon the phenomenological approach of analysis and investigation. This method focuses on information from the private world of the individual, including views, feelings and individual meanings. Cognitive-behavioural theories emphasise the significance of cognitive processes as determinants of behaviour. The assessment of life circumstances is influenced by anticipations, principles, attitudes, assumptions, understandings and ascriptions (Van Niekerk, 1992). The psychodynamic theory is based on the development of a model of how individuals develop from childhood and adolescence into adulthood as well as how this process is conveyed through their transitions. Developmental psychology has a specific significance for counsellors, although it is for them a particular type of developmental psychology, focusing upon personal relationships and the growth of the personality and concentrating less on intellectual or cognitive development. Psychoanalytic explanations of individual development are inclined to centre upon emotions, fantasies and families (Jacobs, 1998).

The majority of volunteers at the non-governmental organisations (NGO's) are lay counsellors who want to make a special contribution to the world. The organisation in this study adopts Carl Roger's person-centred approach as it can be applied to lay counsellors who

possess no professional skills and techniques. This approach is non-directive and perceives the subjective quality of the client-counsellor interaction as a fundamental characteristic of counselling. Client-centred counsellors do not ask how they can solve specific problems or encourage specific behavioural change. They ask how they can offer a relationship that the client can use for personal growth (Grummon, 1979).

The focus in the Rogerian approach is therefore on the ability and capacity of lay counsellors to formulate a relationship with the client. Individuals can be trained to understand their personal qualities in order to formulate a therapeutic relationship with the client. It does not emphasise the amount and quality of skills but on the personal qualities of lay counsellors. Studies conducted by Robert Carkhuff (date unknown, cited in Chidrawi, 1997) stated that lay counsellors can be as effective and valuable as professional counsellors and occasionally may even have an advantage over the professional, in that lay counsellors are more prone to empathise with the help seeker on a genuine individual-to-individual basis rather than on a clinical basis. The subsequent discussion will explore the fundamental characteristics that lay counsellors need to possess in order to provide an empathic relationship.

1.3. The Qualities of Counsellors

Given the emphasis on the counselling relationship, it is also imperative to identify the types of individuals who have the ability to counsel and the capacity to create a genuine relationship. It is essential to identify and understand the personality, characteristics and qualities that volunteers have so that it is possible to comprehend their motivation. Lay counsellors do not have any theoretical training therefore other personal qualities must enable them to be competent in their volunteer activities. The general characteristics that lay counsellors share will now be explored.

While researchers have endeavoured to discover whether specific personality attributes are common among volunteers (Pearce, 1993), literature focusing on the qualities of lay counsellors is limited, with the attention being on the qualities of therapists. The exploration of the literature on therapists will therefore be used as a basis for understanding the inherent qualities of lay counsellors as both are involved in similar settings.

Frank (1973, cited in Wheeler, 2000, p. 66) asserts that a “competent therapist is generally a good person, intelligent, creative, sincere, energetic, demonstrates warmth towards others, responsible and of sound judgement.” These qualities can be applied to competent lay counsellors. Rogers (1957, cited in Wheeler, 2000) similarly identified genuineness, empathy, and positive regard as qualities that counsellors, professional or lay, should possess. Gilbert, Hughes, and Dryden (1989, cited in Dryden & Spurling, 1989, p. 6) argue that empathy is a powerful skill and state “although one may be able to teach someone how to use empathy, it may be much more difficult to train someone to have empathy.” The most fundamental helping skill of all, according to Nelson-Jones (1992), is the ability to be a good and understanding listener. Accurate and attentive listening as well as conveying understanding is essential in helping establishing rapport, helping clients to talk and helping clients to own responsibility and to problem-solve.

Wheeler (2000) conducted a study to determine what qualities good counsellors need to possess. These qualities are openness, emotional stability, professional competence, intelligence, conscientiousness, committed, motivated, receptive to feedback and insightful. Norcross (1990, cited in Wheeler, 2000) evaluated articles and books looking for common factors that facilitate change in counselling. The qualities that therapists’ need to possess include personal characteristics such as affection, kindness, respect, ability to promote hope and being non-judgemental and accepting.

1.3.1. Altruism

The existence of altruistic qualities is perceived as being the inspiring and driving force in individuals helping others in some meaningful way. It has been commonly accepted that counsellors, lay or professional, possess an altruistic personality. In this section, the concept of altruism will be explored in order to comprehend its meaning and significance for counsellors.

According to Grusec (1991) altruism refers to acts of concern for others such as sharing, helping, revealing concern and kindness, comforting and protecting. These acts are performed without having hope of receiving some reward. The act of altruism is by no means followed

by material benefits. The motivation underlying these acts may be diverse and Grusec (1991) states that these may include a yearning for social relations, escape from guilt and feelings of pride and an aspiration to behave in concurrence with one's beliefs.

According to Puka (1994) we generally connect the personality trait of altruism with individual wisdom and maturity. Altruists are frequently appreciated, as they appear to have a remarkable, elevated level of understanding relating to their own nature, and value that of others. In order to be outwardly expansive they have to be inwardly expansive. Altruists should therefore have a well-developed self-concept and high sense of self-esteem. The altruist places good-enhancing values commonly above self-enhancing ones either in a specific decision to act or in the many choices that play a role in creating altruistic motivations (Puka, 1994).

Few attempts have been made to reach a theoretical understanding of an ideal altruistic personality. It is generally accepted that individuals like Mother Teresa and Albert Schweitzer possess unique personality attributes that cause them to be more inclined to exhibit a high capacity of altruism in numerous situations. They are regarded as being ideal examples of what it means to be an altruistic individual (Van Hesteren, 1992).

Although it is hard to accurately highlight which character traits are important and valuable, profound empathy, 'personality integration', compassion, and a high sense of worth are considered to be important (Puka, 1994, p. 186). Psychological research has confirmed several of the sound beliefs concerning the motivations and attributes of altruists. Little has been revealed about the comparative level of 'personality integration' or the cognitive maturity of altruists (Puka, 1994, p. 186). It is commonly acknowledged that personality characteristics have added little to the explanation of altruism and that altruistic behaviour is determined mainly by situational forces. Limited research by cognitive developmentalists proposed that the level of 'cognitive-moral structure' radically influences choice and actions, with greater conceptual complexity guiding to a more righteous and ethically suitable judgement (Puka, 1994, p. 186).

There are several theoretical approaches to understanding the development of an altruistic personality. For example, the behavioural consistency approach states that individuals who constantly exhibit a somewhat high occurrence of prosocial behaviour across different

situations acquire an internal personality characteristic of altruism (Krebs & Van Hesteren, 1992). The situational approach to altruism states that situational variables have a considerable better ability than personality variables to predict behaviour. In order to understand helping behaviour, the interaction between situational and individual-specific variables needs to be explored (Krebs, 1978).

The developmental-interactional approach to an altruistic personality is based on the belief that the dominant cognitive orientations individuals obtain with development shape the patterns of altruistic behaviour they exhibit (Krebs & Van Hesteren, 1992). The cognitive-developmental approach to altruism sees the central motivating force of existence is the general tendency to grow. Individuals' thoughts about altruism develop parallel to cognitive development and change with cognitive maturation. The value and meaning of altruism transforms as they develop more complex theories of the social world. Notions of altruism are attached to notions of character, behaviour and moral responsibility. The concept of altruism is part of individuals' organisation of values and cannot be understood out of context (Krebs, 1978).

The most widely discussed moral-cognitive development theory is that of Kohlberg (1969, cited in Krebs & Van Hesteren, 1992). Kohlbergian stages are depicted as levels of personality growth and as ego stages. Individuals' ways of comprehending their physical and social worlds are organised in terms of cognitive structures that define stages of development. Cognitive structures manage and assimilate experience 'qualitatively' (Krebs & Van Hesteren, 1992, p. 150). They render primary perceptions on events and manners of meaning making that steer information processing and organise behaviour. The meaning and significance individuals consign to events are integrally linked to individuals' conceptions of themselves and others (Krebs & Van Hesteren, 1992).

The primary functions of the cognitive structures that define stages of development are to process information, understand events and bestow experiences with value. In Kohlberg's model, there are three main directions. First, specific cognitive attainments are fundamental, but adequate, for specific types of behaviour. Second, understanding of events produce and structure emotional states, which in turn, give rise to corresponding motives. Lastly, individuals are motivated to act in ways that are uniform with their values and perceptions of themselves. The value individuals place on their perceptions of themselves as moral and

altruistic may provoke behaviours that support these self-perceptions (Krebs & Van Hesteren, 1992).

Basic development must be explained by parameters of system wholes or systems of internal associations. This developmental approach is attentive to the active relations between stage structures and situations. The development of cognitive structure is an outcome of processes of relations between the structure of the individual and the structure of the environment. It is not the immediate result of maturation or the direct result of learning (Puka, 1994). The direction of development of cognitive structure is toward a greater balance in this individual-environment interaction. Thus, a greater balance of reciprocity between the action of the individual upon the distinguished object or situation and the action of the perceived object upon the individual (Kohlberg, 1969, cited in Puka, 1994).

The types of altruism individuals exhibit are anticipated to occur from the interaction between the development stage structures presented to them and the types of situations they encounter and create (Krebs & Van Hesteren, 1992). Differences in altruism arise from the relation between the stage structures individuals have obtained and the opportunities and pressures of the social contexts they produce and encounter. The ways in which individuals see themselves, others and the social and moral associations between them give rise to the types of altruism they exhibit (Krebs & Van Hesteren, 1992).

Krebs and Van Hesteren (1992) propose that individuals usually obtain the ability to perform progressively more satisfactory forms of altruism as they develop. The core of the approach lies in the suggestion that the types of altruism that emerge from fairly high stages of development are more suitable than the forms of altruism that arise from lower stage structures. The universal reason why highly developed stages give rise to more satisfactory types of altruism than earlier stages is because they are more highly distinguished and incorporated. The processes of differentiation and combination act on individuals' conceptions of themselves, others, welfare, rights and roles in ways that shape the quantity and quality of altruism (Krebs & Van Hesteren, 1992).

Krebs and Van Hesteren (1992) claim that there are different types of altruistic personalities. All individuals have the ability to play a part in some type of altruism, but individuals who have attained the capabilities inherent to advanced stages of development possess the ability

to perform an extensive range of more altruistic acts than individuals who have not attained these capabilities. This model provides the foundation for discerning among various forms of altruism, specifically, in terms of the structures that define stages of cognitive, individual, social, and moral development.

Modes of thought, behaviour and feelings regarding individual freedom and love, are placed into six stage transitions (Puka, 1994). Stages involve definite differences in modes of thinking which serves an essential identical function at various stages in development (Krebs, 1978). They give rise to superseding motives and directing orientations whereas attributes provide more situationally specific restrictions (Krebs & Van Hesteren, 1992).

Between Kohlberg's stages one and two, children accept a fairly broader orientation concerning altruism. During this stage, children have the cognitive superiority to understand the notion of reciprocity in a concrete manner. During the third stage altruism becomes most salient. Individuals commonly reach this stage in late elementary school and are distinctive of a substantial portion of the adult population. At stage three moral obligations is characterised in terms of ideal versus concrete reciprocity. Hence the belief 'do unto others as you would have them do unto you' is adopted (Krebs, 1978, p. 155). Orientation is fully considerate to doing one's part in social groups, adhering to the stereotyped demands of social roles and generally conforming and amplifying social acceptance and approval. At stage two individuals are capable of accepting the viewpoints of other individuals one at a time. At stage three people become able to accept the viewpoints of groups of other individuals. The altruism, conformity and stereotyped notions of social functions develop quite easily from the role-taking point of view of stage three. They are all part of one concern, which is to satisfy the widespread anticipation of individuals in one's reference group. This frequently involves losing the self-centredness in order to further the well-being of the group. The anticipations of others are formalised in social roles (Krebs, 1978). Concerns about altruism are included at stage four under larger concerns like preserving social interests. One of the noteworthy characteristics of stage four is the inclination of individuals who have the orientation to place the welfare of society above the welfare of friends and relatives (Krebs, 1978).

Values concerning equal exchange are expected to peak at stage two, values concerning altruism to peak at stage three, and values concerning the preservation of society to peak at stage four. The words that define the values such as altruism and freedom remain unchanged.

However, individuals' comprehension of the social phenomena that they represent becomes highly-developed. At stage two, altruism may denote returning favours and at stage five, altruism denotes promoting the greatest good for society (Krebs, 1978).

The key components of altruism such as self, other, cost and well-being adopt various meaning when conceptualised in terms of different cognitive structures. Real or 'pure' altruism is perceived as an ideal allied with the final stages of personal and social development (Krebs & Van Hesteren, 1992, p. 149). Puka (1994) states that the highest levels of moral-cognitive structure should embody the moral logic of altruism. However, according to Kohlberg, justice is seen as the highest level of moral cognition and moral logic (Puka, 1994). Stage six is the highest level of natural development in moral reasoning. Kohlberg's research proposes that altruistic motivations do not demonstrate superior levels of moral understanding, but merely specific yearnings to go "beyond the call of duty, perhaps even beyond the call of morality" (Puka, 1994, p. 317). Altruism in the moral sense entails improving the welfare of others in specific ways and preferably for specific purposes. It serves the dominant interests of others and advances morally allowable ones, principally as the means of valuing or caring for others. In Kohlberg's theory of moral development, altruism is one of the numerous facets of morality that socially emerge in the lives of individuals. Structures of moral reasoning give rise to points of view that permeate the facets of morality (Puka, 1994).

It is the structure or logic of caring, empathy, and altruism that must be contrasted with Kohlberg's stage of justice. Kohlberg and Power (1981, cited in Krebs & Van Hesteren, 1992, p. 155) suggest that certain individuals may develop a stage seven orientation and go 'beyond justice.' The summit of altruism would seem to lie beyond stage six. A closer glance at Kohlberg's stage six reveals that a great deal of behaviour that would be intuitively regarded as altruistic is required by justice. The obligation to help others, if it exists, is an obligation to go beyond the call of justice or impartiality. It is an obligation of benevolence or compassion in some restrained form. In these ways, Kohlbergian justice at the highest stage can be said to partially accommodate altruism (Puka, 1994).

Kohlberg (1981, cited in Puka, 1994)) characterises the function of morality as directing opposing claims and resolving conflicts of interest among individuals. Settling conflicts impartially is the unique purpose of justice. Individuals consider what they should do morally

and how to evaluate the comparative quality of interests, values, or aims and how to enhance them. Individuals may consider how to establish ideals for personality development, way of life and career choice, or for social advancement. Individuals also regard how to treat people and may regard their potential for growth and their best interests rather than to their actual interests. Moral reasoning thus must involve all these moral concerns (Puka, 1994). Justice, therefore, must depend on other moral concepts to supplement its role. Justice establishes minimal standards of appropriate behaviour and adopts an unbiased attitude toward all values, interests, or activities that are allowable. Altruism should not simply promote justice. It should endeavour to go beyond justice (Puka, 1994).

Daniels (1984, cited in Van Hesteren, 1992) assumes that Maslow's processes of self-actualisation and moral development could be concurrent and equivalent. Daniels suggests that there are similarities between Maslow's stages of self-actualisation and Kohlberg's stages six and seven, as self-actualisation is principally a moral term. Maslow (1970, cited in Van Hesteren, 1992) identifies a collection of personality attributes that are linked with self-actualisation that denotes a hypothetical model of an individual who has accomplished the ultimate stages of development in all sectors. Loevinger (1976, cited in Van Hesteren, 1992) claims that Maslow's self-actualising person is the best explanation of this stage. Maslow (1970, cited in Van Hesteren, 1992) regarded self-actualisation to be a unified collection of attributes with a universal unity and established an altruistic tendency with a highly significant, internal trait of the personalities of self-actualising individuals.

The ideal altruistic personality possesses highly developed view-taking and empathic abilities that make possible a reasonably complete, accurate and profound understanding of the needs of others. Highly developed individuals are capable of experiencing real empathic concern (Van Hesteren, 1992).

The early psychoanalytic literature considers altruism as symptoms of inner conflict. The literature describes how positive behaviour patterns can be understood as being in reality 'reaction formations, defenses against impulses of greed and aggression' (Ekstein, 1978, p. 167). Anna Freud (1936, cited in Ekstein, 1978) asserted that altruism could often be considered as a contribution of care in order to avoid deception and tricks. Altruism could then be regarded as avoidance of, or masking of, aggression. She explored numerous features of the altruistic personality by exploring aspects of childhood and adolescent behaviour in

terms of the development of mechanism of defense, for instance, revolving an unconscious impulse into its conflicting explicit counterpart. She discussed the altruistic surrender, in which individuals' interests are subordinated to those of others as a type of resolution of inner struggle, which then results in the development of symptoms and personality alterations of numerous kinds. Many areas of charity turn out to be tragic guilt, implicit hostility, or self-advertisement instead of an illustration of authentic love (Ekstein, 1978).

A phenomenon presumed to mediate altruistic behaviour on the part of the ideal altruistic personality is the experience of expected existential guilt. Hoffman (1982, cited in Van Hesteren, 1992) states that individuals with the highest level of empathic abilities and empathy for individuals' common troubles may result from the amalgamation of empathic suffering and attentiveness of being in a reasonably advantageous position in relation to the client. Furthermore he states that the ideal altruistic personality type's empathic reaction to the other's common dilemmas, is converted into guilt since he or she is highly motivated to keep with the altruistic requirements of the universally applicable principles of justice personified by the personality ideal. The individual must take responsibility in the manner that is uniform with the personality ideal if they want to preserve their sense of integrity as moral individuals (Van Hesteren, 1992).

1.4. Voluntary Organisations

Some individuals in society are unable to pay for counselling services and are compelled to use services provided by voluntary counselling organisations. In the following discussion the nature and purpose of voluntary organisations as well as the phenomenon of volunteerism will be explored. Attributes of volunteers in general will subsequently be described. In this theoretical review, it is imperative to look at these concepts as this study focuses on a voluntary organisation that mainly incorporates volunteers to provide its services. It will allow an understanding of the broader context of this study to be obtained.

South African President Thabo Mbeki declared the year of 2002/2003 as the year of the volunteer. He conveyed the essence of volunteer work in his following statement made at the 91st anniversary of the African National Congress. “By the work they (volunteers) did to help change the lives of our people for the better, they gave further impetus to the task we face, to ensure that the people continue to act as the builders of their own future” (<http://www.anc.org.za/ancdocs/history/jan8-2003.html>).

Voluntary counselling organisations in South Africa emerged in order to render counselling to distressed individuals who are experiencing different problems and traumas. Volunteerism according to McGuckin (1998, p. 1) is “recognising that a need exists and responding to that need out of one’s own initiative.” According to Smith (1981) voluntary organisations are formal groups, which are non-governmental in nature and operate for non-profit purposes. The counselling organisation of this study is an NGO and operates solely to provide counselling services to individuals in need and does not function for profit intentions. Voluntary organisations share certain commonalities, particularly with their aims, regardless of the varying size and range of their endeavours. They are all charitable and favorably intentioned and endeavour to rectify the quality of life of individuals or communities. Each year, a substantial amount of individuals dedicate considerable amounts of their time and energy to helping others (Clary et al., 1998). Volunteering is a different kind of help to that delivered by individuals who execute casual acts of help or those who are compelled to care for a family member or significant other. A volunteer is under no obligation and generally does not know the individual who will benefit from his or her effort (Christensen, Reininger, Richter, McKeown, & Jones, 1999). Volunteering has been defined as “any relatively uncoerced work, intended to help and done without primary or immediate thought of financial gain” (Scheier, 1982, p. 33, cited in Cooley, 1989, p. 145).

Volunteerism is important to the life quality on both organisational and personal levels. The reward is inherent to the altruistic action itself (Unger, 1991). According to Clary et al. (1998) volunteerism is an important expression of human kindness and concern along with other services being provided such as friendship to the lonely, teaching to the illiterate, counselling to the troubled and health care to the sick. They render these services on a frequent, ongoing, voluntary basis, with their assistance regularly continuing over long periods of time (Clary et al., 1998). The motivation to volunteer, according to Clary et al. (1998), is to assist individuals to convey deeply held values, beliefs and dispositions. Some attitudes serve an

ego defensive function, which protect individuals against unwanted or threatening truths about the self. Lastly, volunteerism provides individuals of all ages with opportunities to play a significant role in the community and create relations with their communities and social causes (Omoto, Snyder & Martino, 2000).

The majority of voluntary organisations in South Africa utilise volunteers to some extent to render the relevant services to the community. According to the South African National Council for Mental Health (1989) volunteers are individuals who give of their time, knowledge and skills to help a certain individual, organisation or community exclusive of receiving any financial rewards for the rendered services. Certain authors were able to identify some of the qualities that are intrinsic to volunteers in general. According to Spitz and Mackinnon (1993, cited in Harper, 1999) volunteers are perceived as having high levels of self-acceptance and self-confidence. They have, to a certain extent, accepted who they are and believe in their thoughts, values and behaviours. They are perceived as being emotionally stable as they have the individual desire to work with their own difficulties (Burke & Hall, 1986, cited in Harper, 1999). Volunteers are also described as possessing a greater sense of trust and determination. Volunteering is marked by several fundamental traits. Volunteers seek out the opportunity to assist others and reach this decision after a period of contemplation about whether to volunteer and the extent of their participation (Clary et al., 1998; Clary & Snyder, 1999). The extent of their participation depends on their motivations, commitments and satisfactions of being involved in voluntary work. According to Clary and Snyder (1991) volunteer work is a nonspontaneous helping activity. Frequently, in such cases, prospective volunteers essentially search for opportunities, rather than respond to an opportunity to help. Another essential trait is that volunteers make a commitment to providing a continuous helping relationship over time, which could involve significant individual costs of time and energy. Lastly, the decision by volunteers about beginning to help and about continuing to help is shaped by whether the specific activity of volunteering corresponds with their own needs and goals. Individuals are drawn to volunteer work as it is appealing to their psychological needs and they come to be fulfilled volunteers if they engage in voluntary work that satisfies their own psychological needs (Clary et al., 1998; Clary & Snyder, 1999). Valuable psychological events, such as commencing on a course of voluntary action and then engaging in those activities over an extensive period of time, depend therefore on matching the motivational concerns of individuals with situations that can comply with and fulfil those concerns (Clary & Snyder, 1999).

It has been noted that volunteers assist in the functioning of the majority of NGO's, which endeavour to assist or improve the community in a specific way (Cnaan & Goldberg-Glen, 1991, cited in Cnaan & Cascio, 1999). Volunteers in most NGO's are perceived as an essential and valuable part of organisations. They are basically a free labour source and consequently have become the backbone of NGO's (Unger, 1991). Therefore, for many NGO's, the work of volunteers is vital to their success and survival (Warburton & Terry, 2000). The reasons given for the value of volunteers to organisations are varied. The use of volunteers permits organisations to maintain and develop their existing services (Cnaan & Goldberg-Glen, 1991, cited in Cnaan & Cascio, 1999). According to Ilsley & Niemi (1981) volunteers promote enhanced public consciousness of and support for these organisations as they are committed to the cause and aims of the organisation. In addition, volunteers encourage grassroots involvement, therefore uniting community knowledge and insights (Harper, 1999). Korten (1990, cited in Harper, 1999) asserts that volunteers play an important role in implementing change. NGO's are unable to cause a considerable amount of social change on their own. If change transpires it probably occurs as a result of voluntary action.

The above discussion begs two important questions: Firstly, what are the motivations that drive individuals to decide to become volunteers and engage in helpful activities? Secondly, having decided to become volunteers, what motivates individuals to continue to provide helping activities? (Clary & Snyder, 1999). These questions will be addressed in the following exploration of motivation.

1.5. The Concept of Motivation

All human behaviour is motivated to fulfil and satisfy particular needs. According to the Oxford Dictionary (1969) motivation is defined as what impels an individual to do certain things. According to Christensen et al. (1989) individuals volunteer for various reasons such as a yearning to give back to their community, meet new people, remain active, assist in a cause they feel strongly about and experience a sense of worth and value. In this section, an overview of several motivational theories will be provided, specifically exploring the psychodynamic theory in more detail. This will be followed by an exploration of studies that have been conducted on the motivation of counsellors.

1.5.1. The Motivation of Volunteers

As volunteers of the organisation are not paid, there has to be some other motive for their dedication to their volunteer work. According to Smith (1981, p. 23) a volunteer is essentially motivated by the expectation of some type of intrinsic and 'psychic' benefit. Voluntary action can be distinguished fundamentally by the quest for psychic benefits and by being arbitrary in nature (Smith, 1975).

According to Schindler-Rainman and Lippitt (1971) certain volunteers seem to place greater motivational weight on the possibility of self-actualisation, while others place a different weight on service and repayment. Schindler-Rainman and Lippitt (1971, p. 51) refers to the former as 'self-actualisers' and the latter as 'servers.' The self-actualiser perceives opportunities for learning, personal growth and development whereas the server perceives opportunities for meaningful contributions. From the life histories of the volunteers in this study it will become apparent whether their motivations are driven to fulfil selfish needs or to serve the community.

According to Mueller (1975, cited in Unger, 1991, p. 72) volunteers are 'paid' for their work in four ways: The volunteers' families utilise the collective benefits, volunteers receive selective incentives such as status or social contact, their families human capital is improved, or an altruistic motivation is fulfilled. Individuals who volunteer tolerate the costs of volunteering in exchange for these apparent personal profits.

Wuthnow (1995) saw reciprocity as being a determining factor in individuals' decisions to become volunteers. Reciprocity means that one cares for others in order to receive help in return – "caring is thus like insurance" (Wuthnow, 1995, p. 70). Volunteers value helping others as they acknowledge the significance of being helped in the past or realise that someday they may need help. Reciprocity does not focus on paying back the particular individuals who were the source of one's assistance. Individuals learn that the kindness they have received can be repaid by helping others. According to Wuthnow (1995, p. 71) the concept of 'serial reciprocity' can be used to describe this perception of caring. 'Serial reciprocity' is probably best described in the phrase 'pass it on.' Some volunteers may feel that they are obliged to give back the good fortune they have experienced. However, they

acknowledge that real needs are being served and the pleasure and fulfillment they obtain in return (Wuthnow, 1995).

Meyer and Allen (1997) define organisational commitment as a psychological state that typifies the individuals' association with the organisation which has repercussions for the decision to remain a member in the organisation. According to O'Reilly and his colleagues (Caldwell, Chatman, & O'Reilly, 1990; O'Reilly & Chatman, 1986; O'Reilly, Chatman, & Caldwell, 1991, cited in Meyer & Allen, 1997) commitment echoes the psychological connection that attaches the member to the organisation but the nature of the connection can fluctuate. According to Kelman (1958, cited in Meyer & Allen, 1997) the psychological connection between volunteers and the organisation can take three different forms, namely compliance, identification and internalisation. Compliance results when viewpoints are accepted not because of widespread views but purely to obtain specific rewards. Identification results when an individual permits influence to create or maintain a satisfying association. An individual might feel pleased to be a member of a group, admiring its values and achievements without assuming them as his or her own. Internalisation results when influence is permitted as the persuaded viewpoints are similar with one's own viewpoints. Thus, the values of the individual and the group or organisation are identical. O'Reilly and Chatman (1986, cited in Meyer & Allen, 1997) suggests that an individual's psychological attachment to an organisation can indicate various combinations of the above three psychological forms.

Meyer and Allen (1997) measured associations between measures of compliance, identification and internalisation and numerous outcome measures such as prosocial behaviour, turnover intention and turnover. They noted that identification and internalisation were negatively connected to turnover intention and turnover and positively connected to prosocial behaviour. Identification and internalisation might best be regarded as the means by which commitment, particularly affective commitment, develops. Volunteers' affective attachment to their organisation may be derived from a yearning to create a satisfying relationship with an organisation (identification) and/or a similarity in the ambitions and ideals held by the individual and the organisation (internalisation). Compliance revealed a contradictory pattern of connections and was also discovered to play an exclusive role in the prediction of turnover intention. In Meyer and Allen's (1997) opinion the volunteers at the counselling organisation would perpetuate their commitment to the organisation through their psychological connection of compliance, identification and internalisation. Commitment

sustains individuals in a state of motivation and thereby drives them to fulfil their desire to satisfy their personal needs. The fulfillment of counsellors' needs is accomplished via assisting others (Meyer & Allen, 1997).

1.5.2. Motivational Theories

By outlining the different motivation theories, an understanding of the counsellors' motivation to fulfil their needs may be understood. Various theories of motivation exist, each identifying what motivates the behaviour of human individuals. These theories recognise that individuals provide a service with the intention of attaining personal rewards in return. However, the underlying rationale for their motivation and the rewards received varies in each theory.

The functional theory of motivation is a motivational perspective, which is directly concerned with the reasons and intentions and the plans and the aims that underlie and create psychological occurrences. It guides inquiry into the "personal and social processes being served by an individual's thoughts, feelings and actions" (Clary et al., 1998, p. 1517). Conventional theories of motivation include McClelland and Atkinson's theory (1973, cited in Henderson, 1981), which focuses solely on rational needs such as power needs. McClelland and Atkinson (1973, cited in Henderson, 1981, p. 209) assert that "persons are motivated to do something (work, volunteer, or participate) based on what they hope to gain from the experience." In this theory, what individuals anticipate obtaining from their experiences is the fulfillment of their power, achievement and affiliation needs. Maslow (1954, cited in Lazarus, 1980) states that basic human needs are grouped in hierarchical order and argues that higher order needs will not become active until lower order needs can be satisfied. Five levels exist in Maslow's proposed needs hierarchy. The physiological needs are followed by needs for safety, love, esteem, and self-actualisation, in that specific order (Jabes, 1978). The highest level is the need for self-actualisation. Even with the four lower need levels filled individuals nonetheless need the complete fulfillment of the self, that is, the fullest achievement and acknowledgment of his or her capability (Lawless, 1979).

1.5.2.1. The Psychodynamic Theory

The review of the psychodynamic theory provides a basis for analysing the outcomes of this study. The present study aims to understand how the participants' current motivation to become lay counsellors is a product of their past life experiences. It seeks to comprehend how past events have influenced and shaped their initial motivation to become volunteer caregivers and their current motivation to remain one. Thus the way in which the participants' past has shaped and influenced their present will be explored.

Given these objectives, it is believed that the psychodynamic approach will provide an adequate and relevant theoretical framework in which the participants' accounts of their life histories can be interpreted. While Maslow's theory focuses on conscious and emotional needs, the psychodynamic theory focuses on unconscious needs.

According to Jacobs (1985) the psychodynamic approach associates past life experiences with current situations. Jacobs (1985) argues that when connecting past and present in a somewhat verbatim manner, there is never only one explanation. It emphasises the interaction of the past with the present, each one illustrating the other (Jacobs, 1994; Jacobs, 1991). Prager (1998, p. 12) similarly perceives that the "past continues to serve the present."

According to Prager (1998) individuals use what they remember or construct of the past to defend themselves from or to provide meaning to their current emotional needs and desires. Individuals therefore, may perceive current experiences through a lens of their past experiences. While the participants give their account of their life history a process of "cross-referentiality occurs as the participant moves back and forth in their life history and makes linkages between different types of events and segments of their life" (Miller, 2000, p. 74).

A characteristic of providing a life account is that it contains "significances beyond the teller's intentions" (Hollway & Jefferson, 2000, p. 35). When individuals view their present experiences through a lens of their past experiences, they may not always be fully aware of all the possible ways in which the experiences of their past have influenced the experiences of their present. The past may affect current motivations in ways that sometimes even the individual themselves are not fully aware. Thus, certain links between the past and present

may be unconscious to them. Hollway and Jefferson (2000) state that it is possible to notice the missing links and thereby make the associations through a theoretical familiarity with the psychodynamic literature. Instilling importance into parts of the participants' life accounts may therefore produce new links of how individuals' past experiences have shaped their current motivations. The psychodynamic approach thus incorporates discovering the workings of the unconscious and the consequences of past experiences (Prager, 1998).

What are the reasons which drive individuals to become caregivers? According to Hayes (2002) it is universal truth that therapists' and caregivers' overarching goal is to diminish human suffering. As indicated by Gibson, Swartz and Sandenbergh (2002) a reason why individuals become caregivers and why it is so important to be a caregiver is that it links them to their own life experiences. Caregivers seem to "share a strong desire to help others, to ease their emotional or physical pain, or comfort them in their distress" (Gibson et al., 2002, p. 3). In addition, it can link them to their losses of the past. According to Jacobs (1998) the loss that individuals have experienced lives on inside them. This internal existence is more than a memory of what the loss was about and produces the emergence of a need to replace that which is lost.

Individuals thus have the need to be caregivers in order to deal with their past events and experiences. For many careworkers it appears to satisfy an intense personal need. "There certainly seems to be some truth in the often-quoted idea of the 'wounded healer' – the person who is driven to help others because of her or his own experiences of pain or difficulty" (Gibson et al., 2002, p. 3).

According to Miller and Baldwin (1987, p. 140) the paradox of one who heals but still remains wounded 'lies at the heart of the mystery of healing.' The origins of therapists' knowledge may be conceptualised along a continuum extending from the personal to the impersonal. At the impersonal side of the continuum would be public sources of knowledge such as findings from scientific study and philosophical logic that are publicised by others. Closer to the personal side of the continuum would be more personal sources of knowledge, such as one's own clinical and life experience. Freud (1910/1959, cited in Hayes, 2002, p. 94) claims "no psycho-analyst goes further than his own complexes and internal resistances permit."

Relating to this need to alleviate the emotional or physical pain is the drive to effect reparation. Zagier Roberts (1994) argues that reparation involves repairing the effects of personal damage caused by traumatic or painful life experiences through the reparation of others. It is partly conscious, but largely unconscious. The traumatic past of individuals can influence their current motivations to become and remain caregivers. Thus counsellors are drawn to work within a caregiving relationship because it provides them with an opportunity to work through their own unresolved issues. They are drawn to this profession partially because of their unconscious needs (Stokes, 1994).

The notion of the wounded healer refers to the idea that deep within each healer lies an internal wound that may perform a chief role in occupational choice (Hayes, 2002). According to Zagier Roberts (1994) the decisions that individuals make concerning their professional training, which client group they will work with, and in what kind of setting are all powerfully influenced by their need to deal with unresolved issues from their past. Holmes (1999, p. 46) states that it is apparent that the “choice of any therapeutic approach may be likened to some extent to the way in which we choose our friends, lovers and therapists.” There are, however, the explicit, cognisant motivations, attractions and recognitions that manipulate our choices. Nonetheless, the core of psychodynamic ideas is the supposition that it is the more concealed, underlying motives which entice and sustain our interest (Holmes, 1999).

Dryden and Spurling (1989) explored the factors that may influence individuals to take up psychotherapy as an occupation. They obtained the autobiographies of several psychotherapists and acknowledged the existence of the following themes across their accounts that appeared to play a significant role in them becoming psychotherapists: the drive to understand and repair; homoeopathic healing; a sense of isolation; the development of empathy; a search for wholeness and psychotherapy as a calling.

Dryden and Spurling (1989) argue that the desire to become a psychotherapist emerges out of an insistent drive to understand other people and the world in which we live. Crouch (1997) sees this desire as significant because individuals’ understanding of the world is not an accurate representation of how the world truly is. The drive towards comprehending the world is invigorated by a desire for a personal understanding of one’s self and one’s own life. Dryden and Spurling (1989, p. 226) noted that psychotherapists chose their profession partly

due to their “affinity with the healer-patient archetype.” Many choose psychotherapy as a vocation because of their own personal difficulties. These may be explored and worked through during training, or projected on to patients as a method of settling personal distress (Kohler, 1986, cited in Dryden & Spurling, 1989).

The inner wounds may not only perform a function in career choice, but is comprised of an important if not fundamental factor in the healing of the patient (Miller & Baldwin, 1987). Jung (1983, cited in Rosser, 1997) wrote about the necessity of being wounded before being able to heal individuals who have experienced traumas. According to Hayes (2002) both elements of the wounded healer archetype exist within the therapist and the client. There is no fundamental distinction between the two people engaged in a healing relationship as both are wounded and both are healers. It is the woundedness of the therapist which allows him or her to understand the patient and which informs the healing action (Hayes, 2002). The transference of healer wounds onto the patient is largely unconscious and results in numerous conditions, particularly if both the helper and the patient share a commonality and consciously or unconsciously identify with one other (Miller & Baldwin, 1987). Hayes (2002) believes that sensitive and empathic listening can possibly occur if the content spoken by one is invested with private meaning by the other. When therapists take in what they hear to their souls it opens up the possibility of deep empathic awareness and understanding. “The therapist’s own personal experience becomes an epistemic well from which to draw” (Hayes, 2002, p. 96). Thus therapists must be familiar with the pathway from their minds to their inner selves as they cannot draw therapeutically on personal experiences without an active and enduring interest in their own histories (Hayes, 2002).

From a psychodynamic perspective early childhood experiences play a pivotal role in psychological and emotional development. In a study conducted by Merodoulaki (1994, cited in Holmes, 1999) it was found that the relationship between parents and between parent and child were important influential factors in selecting psychotherapy as a career in later life. Psychotherapists mostly recalled their childhood as being difficult because of separation from their parents.

In Dryden and Spurling’s (1989) study it was reported that some psychotherapists stated that they were compelled to find answers to their past traumas. This endeavour to discover answers to the difficult experiences and events was occasionally conveyed with willpower

and yearning to not repeat the faults or inadequacies experienced as a child. Some therapists expressed their need to be the therapist they never had. They saw this as an expression of having had an opportunity in some way to repair the difficulties existent in their childhood or the deficiencies experienced as a child. Embedded in this line of thinking is that, if one can become the therapist one never had, then one has already become a therapist for others. As a result the hardships and discontent which one was exposed to become the basis of one's capacity to address the suffering of others. Pain or sadness is considered as having inherent meaning and value. "Pain is seen as that which gives potency" (Dryden & Spurling, 1989, p. 194). One cannot identify with happiness and enjoyment unless one has also experienced pain and sadness. According to Dryden and Spurling (1989) one's suffering is conceived as a resource given that it sensitises one to the suffering of others. For one's own anguish to sincerely become a source of strength and a channel to comprehend the dilemmas of others, the therapist must in all probability not have been too severely wounded. "He or she has been wounded but not crippled or wounded but also healed" (Dryden & Spurling, 1989, p. 195).

Psychotherapists have been called upon to understand the nature of pain, specifically their own pain and thereby search to mend what has gone wrong in their own lives by means of trying to heal others. "Psychotherapy is thought of as a personal journey towards health, in which it is the therapist's own drive towards health and sanity which is healing for the patient" (Dryden & Spurling, 1989, p. 195). This type of healing is referred to by Dryden and Spurling (1989) as homoeopathic healing, which is based on the dogma that like is healed by like. The lay counsellors' need to help others is closely connected with their own healing and development. They may have the need to assist others and thereby help themselves deal with their own past experiences or unresolved issues.

Frank and Paris (1987) explored the psychological factors in the choice of psychiatry as a career. The two hypotheses of the study were that psychiatrists choose their career to heal themselves through their work. The troubled physician may endeavour to compensate for an unhappy childhood by caring for others in adulthood. Psychiatrists can give to their patients what their parents did not give them. It is also likely that physicians have been burdened by the discontent and unhappiness of their parents. The results provided some support for the psychiatrist as a wounded healer, "one who has known and bears the scars of psychological pain and is therefore uniquely qualified to understand it in others" (Frank & Paris, 1987, p.

118). A possible conclusion made by Frank and Paris is that a reasonably unhappy childhood marked by distress is a motivating factor in the choice of psychiatry as a career.

Rycroft (1970, in Holmes, 1999) proposed that obsessional characters are often drawn to psychotherapy as it appears to present the opportunity of knowing about and therefore managing those aspects of themselves and others which are most elusive and impulsive. A recurring theme throughout the collection of Dryden and Spurling's (1989) autobiographies was having a sense of isolation. The numerous autobiographies indicated an early and prevailing sense of being on their own. The psychotherapists described feeling alone, isolated, an outcast, outsider, or a stranger. This sense of separateness from others, together with the consequent desire to become close, results in the need to help others as well as a compelling desire to comprehend the nature of relationships. The nature of the wounds seem to lie particularly in the sense of isolation and separation from others which compels or draws them to search for intimacy with others in professional relationships (Dryden & Spurling, 1989).

What motivates psychotherapists to remain in their profession is the fulfillment of the therapists' own needs and desires and/or the feeling of accomplishment when helping another individual (Dryden & Spurling, 1989). According to Gibson et al. (2002) all these experiences, it seems, are extremely important in motivating individuals to become careworkers.

It has been seen from the theoretical review of motivation that individuals may be influenced to become caregivers in order to fulfill their own individual needs and that their present motivations are influenced by their past experiences.

1.5.3. Exploration of Studies focusing on the Motivation of Volunteers

For decades, psychologists have attempted to understand the factors that guide individuals to help others in need (Stukas, Snyder & Clary, 1999). The idea that a person would make important personal 'sacrifices' for another, especially when that individual is a stranger, has been the focus of various studies (Clary et al., 1998, p. 1516). Researchers have endeavoured to answer the question: Why, in the absence of obligation, do people volunteer? It is easy to

comprehend why individuals are egotistical and why they act in their own self-interest. However, expressions of concern for the needs of others are less comprehensible (Grusec, 1991). Why do a considerable amount of individuals become involved in volunteerism? The literature focusing on volunteerism in general is more extensive than the literature exploring specific types of volunteering such as lay counselling. These general studies will therefore be explored as there are aspects which will relate to lay counsellors.

Findings in motivational studies indicate that a wide range of reasons exists. Acts of volunteerism that seem to be reasonably similar on the surface may expose strikingly disparate underlying motivational processes, explicitly serving different individual, social and psychological functions (Harper, 1999). On the one hand individuals volunteer because of altruistic motives. They wish to help others and desire to be of service. However, a sole focus on altruism has been found to be problematic and research has focussed on egoistic motives, career opportunities, status and religious associations (Harper, 1999). The tension between altruism and egoism will be explored in greater detail.

Certain studies have thus focused on the altruistic and egoistic motives of individuals. According to Unger (1991) a number of studies on volunteerism cite altruistic reasons among the main motivations to volunteer. Definitions of altruistic reasons vary by study: "helping people (Howarth, 1976), benefitting children (Henderson, 1981), working for a cause (Gittman, 1975), showing care (Jenner, 1981), demonstrating patriotism (Moskos, 1971) and serving the community (Chapman, 1980)" (Unger, 1991, p. 74). In a study conducted by Unger (1991) there was evidence for an altruistic motive in volunteerism. Frisch and Gerrard (1981, cited in Clary & Snyder, 1991) factor-analysed their motivational items and attained an altruistic and an egoistic factor. They found that altruistic motives were the primary motives for volunteering. Wiehe and Isenhour (1977, cited in Clary & Snyder, 1991) examined the significance of four motivational categories on volunteers obtained through a recruitment centre and found that the order of importance, in descending order, was altruism, personal satisfaction, self-improvement and external, societal demands. Fitch (1987, cited in Clary & Snyder, 1991) conducted a similar study on volunteers in community service organisations. The volunteers rated the importance of twenty items designed to reveal altruism, egoism, or social obligation as reasons for volunteering. In this study the highest rated item was an egoistic one, followed by altruistic and social obligation reasons.

Brimmer (1994) similarly explored the experiences and motivations of lay telephone counsellors and discovered altruistic motives as being central. Brimmer's study explored the factors, which affect the motivation of volunteer telephone counsellors. He discovered that the main themes of motivation were altruistic incentives and personal growth. The effect of these factors varied in relation to the degree and duration of involvement with the organisation.

According to Clary and Snyder (1991) the one consistent finding throughout the literature on the motivations of volunteers is therefore the recognition of altruism or humanitarian concern as a main motivation. There appears to be an enveloping value-expressive element that is fundamental to volunteer activity. There is some evidence that some volunteers may volunteer also out of ego-defensive needs. Rosenham (1970, cited in Clary & Snyder, 1991) and Clary and Miller (1986, cited in Clary & Snyder, 1991) explored the psychoanalytic idea that altruistic behaviour is related to the presence of inner conflicts, anxieties and uncertainties regarding individual worth and capabilities. They assert that helping others provides the means of defending one's ego. Individuals may view volunteerism as providing self-protection. Individuals volunteer in order to protect themselves from recognising and accepting undesirable, unwanted, or threatening truths about themselves, which may be accepted in the absence of the good deeds of their voluntary activities. It also provides the means to work through their own psychological problems and/or issues, or to assure that they will be worthy of receiving good rewards in their futures (Rosenham 1970, cited in Clary & Snyder, 1991; Clary & Miller, 1986, cited in Clary & Snyder, 1991). Ekstein (1978, cited in Clary & Snyder, 1991) explored various psychoanalytic accounts of helping behaviour and noticed that the writers paid attention to the mechanisms of guilt, reaction formations such as defenses against greed, narcissism and egotism.

While some studies have attempted to determine the exact motivation that volunteers possess, others have strived to determine whether motivations can be diversified. Clary et al. (1998) aimed to determine if motivations of volunteers are diverse and complex. They adopted the strategy of functional analysis to understand the various motivations that stimulate individuals to become volunteers and that maintain their efforts over time. Clary et al. (1998) identified six personal and social functions served by volunteering: values, understanding, social, career, protective and enhancement functions. These motivations can be conceptualised and examined in terms of their function in directing individuals towards volunteer work. The first function that may be fulfilled by the participation in volunteer work is the provision of

opportunities for individuals to convey values associated with altruistic and humanitarian concern for others. A second function possibly served by volunteering involves the opportunity to experience new learnings and practice skills and abilities (Clary et al., 1998). Volunteering allows greater understanding to be obtained. New insights into individuals they come into contact with are achieved, thus fulfilling an intellectual interest about the world. Volunteering provides the opportunity to exercise, or practice knowledge and skills that otherwise could not be used. In addition to gaining an improved understanding of the world, or honing certain skills, volunteering also provides the means to obtain additional skills and capabilities (Clary & Snyder, 1991).

The third function is a social function, which concerns obtaining companionships with others. Volunteering may provide opportunities to meet new people or to be involved in an activity perceived favourably by significant others (Clary et al., 1991). Clary et al. (1991) acknowledged that acquiring new friendships may fulfil an intense personal need. Some individuals may recognise volunteering as the means of enlarging their social circles, specifically making new social contacts or creating new social opportunities. In addition, volunteering may help one assimilate and get along well with significant members of one's reference group (Clary & Snyder, 1991). A fourth function that was proposed is concerned with career-related benefits that may be received from involvement in volunteer work. A fifth function involves processes connected with the functioning of the ego. Motivations concentrate on guarding the ego from negative features of the self. Volunteering may function to decrease guilt over being more privileged than others and to deal with one's own personal problems. The final function that was proposed arises from indicators that the ego has multiple functions (Clary et al., 1991). One of these is the enhancement function which concentrates on the ego's growth, development and strivings (Clary et al., 1998).

In another study conducted by Clary and Snyder (1999, p. 157) the 'multimotivational nature of volunteering' was revealed. Different volunteers attempt to fulfil diverse goals and the same volunteer may be attempting to fulfil more than one goal. Not only may the same action serve several functions for different individuals, the same act may serve more than one psychological function for the same individual. Approximately two thirds of participants indicated that they had two or more significant motivations. The finding that volunteers have manifold motives is fascinating as it relates to the altruism-egoism debate regularly found in discussions in the psychological literature on motivation. This argument centres on whether

the motivations underlying a helpful act are ever really altruistic (based on concern for others) as opposed to egoistic (based only on concern for the self). The motivations of volunteers can therefore not be categorised as either altruistic or egoistic as this study revealed that they have both kinds of reasons for volunteering: 'other-interested' and 'self-interested' considerations (Clary & Snyder, 1999, p. 157).

In a survey by Anderson and Moore (1978, cited in Clary & Snyder, 1991) participants reported both egoistic and altruistic reasons for volunteering. The results from this study question the 'purity idea' signifying that a motive may not be either altruistic or egoistic but might in fact consist of a combination of these two motives (Clary & Snyder, 1991, p. 141). This begs the question as to whether altruistic motives can truly be mentioned without considering egoistic motives (Clary & Snyder, 1991).

According to Warburton and Terry (2000) a second body of research focuses on the motivation of individuals in middle or late adulthood. These studies have examined the association between social and demographic variables and the tendency of older people to volunteer. The majority of counsellors at the counselling organisation of this study are in middle or late adulthood. It is thus pivotal to look at some of the studies that have been conducted on older volunteers.

As older individuals face retirement they also face the consequences of this transition. According to McGuckin (1998, p. 7) many feel that retirement is a difficult and jarring transition "from engagement to disengagement, from productivity to idleness." Research on older volunteers has found that there are numerous factors constantly related with volunteering. Older volunteers are more likely than nonvolunteers to have a higher socioeconomic status, to highly assess their health, to be married, to have a religious association, to be in paid work, to have larger social affiliations and to have a history of volunteering. Older people's involvement in volunteer work is said to satisfy the human need to be productive. There is a considerable amount of evidence linking volunteering behaviour among older people to better mental and physical health.

Warburton and Terry (2000) conducted a study in order to test the utility of a revised theory of planned behaviour in the prediction of intentions to volunteer among older people. As opposed to previous studies of the predictors of volunteering among older people which have

failed to take into account the role that either the social context or personal beliefs and attitudes perform in influencing older people's decisions to volunteer, this study was designed to investigate the function of both personal and social factors in the prediction of intentions to volunteer. One of the main findings of this study is that older people are motivated to volunteer not just because of their internal belief systems, but also because they believe that those close to them support and approve of them being a volunteer. Findings indicated that social relations are principal concerns in the decision to become a volunteer.

Volunteerism has been acknowledged as a chief source of rewards especially for older adults. However, relatively little research has explored the psychological benefits older people gain by their involvement in volunteerism (Omoto et al., 2000). McGuckin (1998) reported a study that showed that participants experience increased self-esteem, regenerated feelings of health and vitality, and new and gratifying social associations with peers. Wuthnow (1995) also noted that individuals who partake in volunteer work are likely to learn that their self-confidence increases. In addition, individuals can fulfil their desire to feel appreciated.

Omoto et al. (2000) integrated a life course approach with contemporary theorising on motivationally associated reasons for social behaviour and examined the reasons, anticipations and outcomes of adult volunteers of different ages. The life course approach conceptualises the life course in terms of the various functions and activities that individuals take on and discard over time. This perspective to understanding human behaviour lays emphasis on cultural norms and hopes and has an interest in individuals and their social background. This approach is evidently associated with a social psychological analysis of human behaviour.

Omoto et al. (2000) similarly sees the particular significance of the relationship between individuals and their social contexts and the distinct roles which individuals perform at different stages in their lives. It is frequently insinuated that, as older adults retire, they lose occupational functions that supply them with valuable associations to their communities, consequently eliciting distress about the outcomes of losing efficient functions on well-being. As older adults cease to work they could be subjected to feelings of worthlessness and uselessness and believe that their lives have no purpose. Volunteering is one specific post-retirement role that may improve the psychological functioning of older adults. Involvement in voluntary work is linked with better physical health and lower psychological distress

(Krause, Herzog & Baker, 1992, cited in Omoto et al., 2000). It is also an important marker of life satisfaction among older adults (Harlow & Cantor, 1996, cited in Omoto et al., 2000). Volunteerism becomes especially important for achieving a sense of purpose and meaning. Volunteer work is thus pursued to feel useful, needed and valuable in society (Omoto et al., 2000).

Omoto et al. (2000) proposed that individuals of various ages are confronted with diverse life tasks and that it is from these life tasks that more explicit motivations arise. Life tasks are plans that have grounding in particular lower level needs, aims and motivations, with volunteerism as a means for attending to some of these concerns. This study concentrated on two purposes for volunteerism at different stages of the life course – interpersonal purposes and societal ones. Individuals become volunteers in order to gratify either a general concern with creating relationships with others or a general concern with fulfilling duties or commitments to society. Omoto et al. (2000) hypothesised that older adults are likely to be motivated to engage in volunteerism for reasons other than to obtain friends or to lessen their loneliness, while younger adults, are likely to be more motivated to become volunteers by interpersonal relationships concerns. The results were as expected. Younger volunteers receive satisfaction from their work to the extent that relationships are created whereas older volunteers receive benefits from outcomes associated with societal concerns. Gidron (1978, cited in Clary & Snyder, 1991) conducted a study and obtained opposing results. He concluded that older volunteers were to some extent more likely to consider volunteering as a way of keeping contact with their community and even in some way with their past.

Clary and Snyder (1991) summarised numerous studies that have been conducted on volunteers and recognised consistencies that emerged from these studies. Firstly, several studies reported a connection between age and some of the motives. Volunteers, who were younger, relative to the older age groups, were more likely to report that the motives of gaining career-related experiences, making social contacts and learning and self-development were moderately important. Secondly, the volunteers in these studies reported the significance of altruism. Thirdly, these studies discovered evidence for the existence of other motives. Many could be called egoistic motivations despite a few making distinctions among self-orientated motives.

Other studies have attempted to measure volunteer activity. The volunteer experience may change the volunteer and his or her motivations, and rather than motivations influencing volunteering, it could be a case of volunteer participation influencing motivations. Both Allen and Rushton (1983, cited in Clary & Snyder, 1991) and Clary and Miller (1986, cited in Clary & Snyder, 1991) cite numerous studies that have found “positive personality and motivation-relevant changes as a result of volunteering” (Clary & Snyder, 1991, p. 136). There are investigations that have examined motivational factors at the beginning of the volunteer experience and then tracing the volunteers’ involvement. Such potential studies (e.g. Clary & Miller, 1986, cited in Clary & Snyder, 1991) have discovered initial motivational differences associated to later behavioural differences in volunteers and propose that these motivational factors may have causal importance and influence consequent aspects of the volunteer experience.

Some studies have addressed questions about continued participation by comparing volunteers with different levels of participation and commitment. These studies addressed the question of factors, particularly motivational ones that are influential in determining how long volunteers engage in an activity. Clary and Orenstein (1991, cited in Clary & Snyder, 1991) discovered that volunteer crisis counsellors who ended their involvement prematurely had reported less altruistic reasons for volunteering initially than did other volunteers who completed the anticipated length of service or those who were asked to terminate due to their lack of abilities. Rubin and Thorelli (1984, cited in Clary & Snyder, 1991) discovered that the duration of involvement with a Big Brother/Big Sister program was inversely connected to the number of egoistic reasons influencing participation into this work but unconnected to the number of altruistic motives.

Other studies have compared volunteers and paid employees in order to determine the motivations of each group. Pearce (1983, cited in Clary & Snyder, 1991) compared volunteer and paid employees involved in the same kind of work (newspaper, poverty relief, family planning and fire department) and discovered that the volunteers have higher levels of service and social motivations than paid workers. The two groups of workers did not differ on intrinsic motivation (enjoyment of completing the work). Allen and Rushton (1983, cited in Clary & Snyder, 1991) reviewed nineteen published studies comparing community mental health volunteers with nonvolunteers. Their review revealed that volunteers, compared with nonvolunteers, held more internalised moral principles, positive attitudes toward self and

others, a greater level of self-efficacy, greater emotional stability and a greater amount of empathy. Allen and Rushton (1983, cited in Clary & Snyder, 1991) deduced that community mental health volunteers possessed numerous attributes typically related with what may be thought of as an altruistic personality.

1.6. The Counselling Organisation

It is important to be familiar with some information about the organisation that is being explored in this study. This NGO is an established organisation consisting of trained lay counsellors, who voluntarily provide the round-the-clock service to individuals who confront personal suffering or a life crisis, in order to be supportive and responsive to individuals at a helpless stage of their crisis (Chidrawi, 1997). It is a community-based movement trying to strengthen communities by empowering carefully selected individuals with counselling skills in order to become lay counsellors. Thus, the organisation is often perceived as a 'bridge' between distraught individuals and service organisations that can offer help to callers (Chidrawi, 1997, p. 7).

The first centre opened in Cape Town in 1968. Since then other centres around the country have been opened. The organisation provides various counselling services and manages the national 24-hour counselling line for South Africa. In addition to providing telephone and face-to-face counselling to the public, the organisation places counsellors in clinics, police stations, companies, or in mobile units within as many communities as possible (Chidrawi, 1997).

The organisation believes in a non-directive style of active client-centred counselling intertwined with decision-making skills in the counselling process. The philosophy of the organisation focuses on emotions and how they may influence the way individuals behave and cope with life challenges. The support that is provided includes the recognition and working through of feelings that emerge and appear to be unsettled in order to enable the individual to move forward. They also provide support for individuals after traumatic experiences, as well as helping people to empower themselves. It assists in the process in which the counsellor and counsellee work together towards: instantaneous steps of being able

to function; understanding, insight, acknowledgment and acceptance of self and reality; allowing the exploration of options and making of decisions; and recruitment of suitable community resources and referrals. Ultimately the organisation wishes to permit the caller to confront his or her future with more coping skills, hope and self-confidence (Chidrawi, 1997).

1.7. Aims and Rationale

The pilot study, conducted in 2002, aimed to explore the motivation of long-term volunteer counsellors at a Cape Town based counselling organisation. The objective of the study was to obtain an in-depth understanding of the volunteers' motivation to become counsellors by exploring their motivation to be one. The main focus of the study was to explore the factors that influenced and affected the motivation of the counsellors. The study attempted to answer the question of 'what is it that motivates ordinary individuals from society to help strangers with whom they have absolutely no connection' and 'what holds them in this often demanding work?'

The pilot study identified two important aspects of motivation. On the positive side of motivation lies the need to meet particular individual needs and on the negative side lies the consequences of motivation, namely stress and burnout. This study suggested that motivations were in the counsellors' views, closely tied to their life experiences. But the pilot study however, did not provide a comprehensive overview of how these experiences impacted on their decisions to become counsellors.

In this study there is an attempt to obtain a holistic understanding of the counsellors' motivation by tracing the life events and experiences that have influenced the participants' decision to become volunteer counsellors and their motivation to remain as such. The method that will be used to obtain these influences will be the narrative life history approach, in which the counsellors will be asked to give an account of their life stories. This methodology will allow the life experiences of participants to emerge. By employing the life history approach, it is anticipated that individuals will provide accounts of their life stories, with specific reference to how their life histories have motivated and influenced their decisions to become caregivers.

This study also extends the pilot study insofar as it focuses on the potential for different and diverse experiences and events that may motivate individuals to undertake counselling work. It aims to determine if there are similarities in terms of life events or experiences that drive individuals to become caregivers.

The pilot study focused on counsellors at one centre of the counselling organisation. This research will explore the experiences of counsellors from two centres, one in Cape Town and the other in Bishop Lavis. Each centre is located in different residential areas in the Western Cape in order to reach individuals located in different socio-economic settings and who under Apartheid were classified as belonging to different race groups. At each centre there is an attempt to ethnically match the counsellors and the clients. The centre in Cape Town is staffed by predominantly white counsellors and the centre in Bishop Lavis is staffed by predominantly coloured counsellors. This study will therefore interview both coloured and white counsellors, working in these different settings.

Given the significance of NGO's in South Africa and the importance of the work being conducted, the life stories of individuals who volunteer in this field are pivotal. They render an understanding of the meaning that these individuals assign to their lives and ascribe to their voluntary involvement in the counselling organisation. Studies regarding lay volunteers have to a large extent concentrated on their attributes and motivation while ignoring the life stories of volunteers thus indicating the significance of this study.

The aim of the study is to explore the life experiences of the counsellors and to holistically understand what it means to be a volunteer caregiver. The first concern is what swayed them initially to become a counsellor. The second is what influences their decision to remain a counsellor. The study aims to explore the life histories of the volunteer counsellors by focusing on their descriptions of their experiences and events over the course of their lives and the way these experiences and events may have influenced their decisions to become volunteer counsellors. It attempts to discover the meanings individuals ascribe to their lives and experiences.

In the context of the theoretical framework, which is provided, the researcher hoped to analyse the interview material so as to:

- 1) Explore and identify the possible ways in which the experiences and events in individuals' lives may have contributed towards their current motivations to become counsellors with or without their conscious awareness of these as significant.
- 2) Provide some understanding of how the context of the individuals' lives may have helped to shape their experiences and motivations.
- 3) Explore commonalities in their life histories.

University of Cape Town

CHAPTER 2:

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

2.1. Introduction

This chapter will present and discuss the methodology that was employed in the study. The rationale for adopting a qualitative method will be discussed and the choice of the narrative approach will be explored. The process of conducting the research will then be discussed. Lastly, the method of analysis that was adopted to provide meaning to the life histories of the participants will be explored.

2.2. A Qualitative Approach

Corresponding with the aims of this study it was decided that a qualitative method would provide the best method of obtaining the information that was required, allowing the researcher to enter the internal world of the volunteers. According to Flick (1998, p. 2) qualitative research is of specific relevance to the study of social relations and “the growing individualisation of ways of living and biographical patterns.” The qualitative approach is concerned with the “the relativity of actors’ accounts of their social worlds, and the relation between sociological descriptions and actors’ conceptions of their actions” (Neuman, 1997, p. 328). This method therefore permits individuals’ subjective meanings to arise, which is one of the main aims of the study.

A qualitative research interview will be used in this study. King (1994, p. 174) defines the qualitative research interview as “an interview, whose purpose is to gather descriptions of the life-world of the interviewee with respect to interpretation of the meaning of the described phenomena.” The main aim of the qualitative research interview is to explore the research topic from the perspective of the interviewee, and to comprehend how and why the interviewee comes to hold their specific perspective (King, 1994). Interviews allow the exploration of issues that may be too complex to investigate through quantitative means (Banister, Burman, Parker, Taylor, & Trindall, 1994). Due to the research question consisting

of different levels of meaning that need to be explored, the qualitative research interview is a suitable method to explore the diverse meanings elicited by the question (King, 1994). This method of obtaining qualitative data is regarded as the most appropriate for this research due to the evident complexity of the research topic and the exploratory nature of the research. By using this method the subjective experiences of the counsellors can be explored and understood as “interviews are one of the most common and most powerful ways to try and understand our fellow human beings” (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998, p. 361).

2.3. Narrative Approach

According to Polkinghorne (1988, p. 13) the most comprehensive meaning of narrative signifies any spoken or written presentation. Narrative can refer to the process of making a story, to the cognitive scheme of the story, or to the results of the process, which are called ‘stories’ or ‘histories.’ Polkinghorne (1988) states that narrative, as a story, refers to a specific type of discourse. “Stories are linguistic expressions of this uniquely human experience of the connectedness of life” (Ricoeur, 1990/1992, cited in Polkinghorne, 1995, p. 7). The narrative, according to Denzin (1989), signifies a story that reports a sequence of events that are relevant for the narrator and his or her audience. Furthermore, Denzin states it has an internal logic that has meaning to the narrator.

A personal narrative, according to Crossley (2000, p. 67), signifies one of the ways in which individuals narratively structure and construct life insofar as it is an “act of imagination that is a patterned integration of our remembered past, perceived present and anticipated future.” According to Denzin (1989) personal histories is a type of narrative. Personal histories, which will be captured during the interviews, is the re-building of lives through interviews and personal experience stories. Denzin (1989, p. 38) argues that, “personal histories envelop and embed self and personal experience stories within a larger narrative structure, that is, the story of a life. The full meaning of a personal experience or self-story can often only be gleaned by locating the story in the biography of the speaker.”

In a story, events and behaviours are assembled into an organised whole by means of a plot, which is a type of theoretical and organising scheme by which an appropriate meaning of

individual events can be shown. The plot is the narrative structure through which individuals comprehend and explain the association between the events and choices of their lives. It relates events by causally relating a preceding choice or occurrence to a later life outcome (Polkinghorne, 1995). It functions to convert a list of events into a 'schematic whole' by highlighting and identifying the role that specific events had in the outcome of the story (Polkinghorne, 1988, p. 18). Therefore it is the "fundamental scheme for linking individual human actions and events into interrelated aspects of an understandable composite" (Polkinghorne, 1988, p. 13). An aim of this research is for individuals to construct narratives of their own personal lives and determine how they make sense of these events in terms of having an influence and effect in their life outcomes.

Polkinghorne (1988) indicates that the narrative approach allows individuals to interpret who and what they are by telling their own life story. It enables the concepts to be examined as one entity, which Polkinghorne (1988, p. 36) refers to as the 'narrative organisational scheme.' This scheme is of significance for comprehending human activity and events that affect human beings. Human activity is the result of the amalgamation of individuals' previous learnings and experiences, and proposed aims and intentions. Human action is significant as it is the subject matter of stories (Polkinghorne, 1995). The organisational scheme reveals the rationale and direction in human interactions and causes individual human lives to be understandable as wholes (Polkinghorne, 1988).

Narrative is a form of 'meaning making' (Polkinghorne, 1988, p. 36). It acknowledges the higher order meaning of individual experiences by considering how they function as parts in a whole. Human actions are arranged into wholes according to the roles these actions and events play in bringing about a conclusion. "The narrative approach serves as a lens through which the apparently independent and disconnected elements of existence are seen as related parts of a whole" (Polkinghorne, 1988, p. 36). An autobiographical narrative shows a single life as integrated and complete. In stories about other lives and in histories of social groups, narrative illustrates the interconnectedness and meaning of apparently random activities. Participants reconstructing their stories in the research process are significant. It provides the lens to explore and understand the actions and events that have influenced the participants' decision to volunteer. The participants' experiences of becoming counsellors as well as the underlying meaning of their voluntary activity are recognised. The narrative interviewing technique was thus selected as it permits the researcher to approach and understand the

interviewees' experiential world in a more comprehensive and inclusive way. Behaviours and thoughts can be explored, thus enabling the researcher to obtain an understanding of the subjective world of the participants.

Bruner (1986) suggests that narrative is performed on a dual landscape. There is a landscape of action on which events develop and there is the landscape of consciousness, which comprises the inner worlds of the characters performing the action. The landscape of consciousness includes the interpretations of the characters in the story. Thoughts, awareness, assumptions, opinions and conclusions govern this landscape (White, 1991). This landscape of action comprises events interrelated in a particular sequence through time, according to a certain plot. This renders the text reader with a perspective of how the theme unfolds across events through time (Bruner, 1986). According to Kenyon (1998, cited in Harper, 1999) the notion of plot is important in this landscape, as stories are not impartial. They have meaning and functions.

Miller (2000) defines the narrative approach as basing itself essentially upon the continuing development of the participant's perspective throughout the telling of a life. Individuals' viewpoint possesses a fluid nature, as it is actively constructed during the interview. The act of constructing a narrative is more than simply selecting specific events to become a part of the story and then inserting them in a suitable order. The events themselves are established in light of the complete story. They become functions of the narrative being told (Bruner, 1986).

White (1991) states that lives are multi-sited and multi-storied. Individuals choose various types of stories at different times in their lives. This construction is according to the context they find themselves in and the reasons why the narrative is being formulated (Kenyon, 1998, cited in Harper, 1999). Individuals live in a state of continuous construction and reconstruction of their lives. Stories are in an unrelenting state of construction (White, 1991). "The narrative metaphor proposes that persons live their lives by stories – that these stories are shaping life, and they are real, not imagined effects - and that these stories provide the structure of life" (White, 1991, p. 28). Bruner (1986) argues that our lives are also a process of narrative interpretation. This interpretation is not private and locked in our individual minds. But is based on individual encounters with others.

Miller (2000) believes that the narration of biographical events provides the opportunity to look at some of the motives and understandings directing the actions of the participants. Ultimately, through the interview process, the motivations of the participants will come to the fore. The participants will be able to construe how their life events have motivated them to become volunteer caregivers and how their past is still motivating them. By using this method, the aim of formulating a hypothesis “on the principle of how the life history (or specific lived-through experiences in the past) and the life story (or the presentation of specific experiences in the present) are connected” (Jones & Rupp, 2000, p. 286).

2.3.1. The Life History Interview

Life histories are a particular type of narrative. Life history is frequently presented as if it were a particular case of the more general class of narratives (Hatch & Wisniewski, 1995). The interviews took on a life-history approach as it is after all, “the subjective perspective that tells us what we are looking for in all our research efforts” (Atkinson, 1998, p. 5).

According to Miller (2000, p. 8) the perspective of the life history approach is “the totality of the biographical experience. It allows one to grasp a sense of the totality of a life.” What distinguishes the life history approach from other types of qualitative research is the focus on the individual. The outcomes of the life history method provide different perspectives on individuals. The life history has the ability to centre around the principal moments, significant events, or critical incidents that rotate around indecisiveness, perplexities and conflicts thereby achieving a greater sense of process to a life and giving a more multifaceted view of reality. The life history approach therefore emphasises subjectivity. “It also presents more ‘rounded’ and believable characters than the ‘flat’, seemingly irrational, and linear characters from other forms of qualitative inquiry” (Sparkes, date unknown, cited in Hatch & Wisniewski, 1995, p. 116).

According to Atkinson (1998) during the life history interviews there is an increase of the participants’ working knowledge of themselves. They realise deeper significance in their lives through the procedure of reflecting and placing the events, experiences and emotions that they have lived into verbal expressions (Ponterotto, Jackson & Nutini, 1998). Atkinson (1998) sees

that life histories can serve as a principal means for comprehending the pattern of individuals' lives. By using this method in the study, the researcher was able to identify a pattern and thereby construe how the events in the interviewees' life histories facilitated their decision to become volunteer counsellors.

The life history method permits the content of the individuals' lives to remain dominant regardless of external influences such as the subject of the research topic and the specificity of the interviewee-interviewer relationship. The concern of researcher bias throughout the interview process is attended to (Jones & Rupp, 2000). "In contrast to other qualitative techniques, it is the interviewees' frame of reference, their gestalt or system of relevancy, which structures narrative interviewing, not the interviewer's agenda" (Jones & Rupp, 2000, p. 277). By using customary question-answer format, Flick (1998) argues the participants may not be able to express their subjective experiences completely. The interview schedule may hinder a full narrative expression of their life histories. It is for this reason that the life history interviewing technique was selected. Using the life history approach the participant is then able to provide a rich and detailed subjective experience.

Life history work focuses on the importance of the researcher in the process of collecting, interpreting and reporting biographical information. According to Miller (2000) the participants will give an account of their life story that fits with what they perceive as being the interviewer's areas of interest and tell their story in a way that they consider will be relevant for the interviewer. However, the participants do not just narrate a chronological account of items they think will interest the interviewer. When reconstructing their life histories they are relating and connecting experiences and events they consider as relevant from their own distinctive subjective perspective. "During the interview, the interviewee will be unconsciously reinterpreting past events, actions and experiences as he/she decides what and how to present the past" (Jones & Rupp, 2000, p. 280). Jones and Rupp (2000) view this method as an invitation from the interviewee to the interviewer into his or her specific presentation of his or her biography.

Life history narratives have certain disadvantages as a research method. These disadvantages needed to be recognised in order to appropriately use the adopted method. Marshall and Rossman (1999) consider the main limitation of the narrative approach to be its apparent deficiency of generalisation. A key content complexity is the deficiency of conventional rules

of selection and of appropriate analytical concepts to ascertain a coherent frame of reference. As life histories are frequently autobiographical as well as biographical, the problems of truth and bias create some drawbacks of using this technique. Is the writer of the document reporting the truth? Does any individual know the causes of his or her own behaviour adequately enough for their statements to be given total credibility? It is significant to acknowledge that these types of questions are brought up continuously in narrative work. According to Flick (1998) a further limitation is the possibility that factual experiences and events may not be expressed fully. The participants may not be able to express the experiences or events as they actually occurred or participants may not be able to remember the experiences or events as they really happened. This may lead to memories being recreated. Some participants may also not be able to give a narrative account of their lives.

Through the life history interview method the researcher hoped to use this research to explore the following areas:

- 1) A description of the various motivations counsellors themselves acknowledge as contributing to their environment in voluntary counselling.
- 2) An account of the life events and experiences they describe as being important in leading them to undertake this kind of work.

2.4. Participants and Procedure

Access to the organisation and its counsellors was negotiated prior to conducting the interviews. Participants were randomly selected from a list of active members at both centres. There were no exclusionary criteria due to the small number of face-to-face volunteer counsellors at each centre.

Interviews were conducted with six volunteer counsellors who offer face-to-face counselling. Three are based at the Cape Town centre and the other three are based at the Bishop Lavis centre. The ages of participants ranged from thirty seven to sixty three years old. The mean age of the participants was fifty-three. Follow-up interviews were conducted following the

analysis of the interview data. The researcher individually presented the interpretations that were made of the material to the participants in order to obtain feedback on the formulated interpretations.

2.5. The Interviews

2.5.1. The Initial Interview

Each interview took place at the organisation to which the participants belong. Prior to the commencement of each interview, each respondent was given a consent form explaining and clarifying the aims of the study, which they had to sign (see Appendix A.). The interviews lasted approximately ninety minutes.

Obtaining life histories has the quality of anchoring individuals' account to events that have really occurred (Hollway & Jefferson, 2000). In the interviews, participants were asked to give an account of their life history in relation to the topic of this research. The following instructions were given to the participants at the start of the interviews:

"I would like you to give an account of your life history. If you could start by recollecting your childhood memories and describe your personal experiences of your childhood. I would then like you to explore and describe your experiences of adolescence and adulthood. During your account I would like you to think of the relationships, events and experiences that had an effect or impact on you and your life outcomes. You can also discuss the events that stood out for you. To end off the interview I would like you to give an account of your motivation and how it compelled you to become a voluntary counsellor."

In the traditional structured interview method, questions regularly elicit a one-word answer rather than a story. Thus, questions about a given topic were turned into 'story-telling invitations' (Hollway & Jefferson, 2000, p. 35). Prompts were used to permit the continual nature of the participants' story-telling activity (see Appendix B.). Open-ended questions were used as prompts in order to elicit the participants' past life experiences, events and motivations that have influenced and shaped their present motivations and life outcomes. The outcome of being a volunteer counsellor was specifically explored in more detail. While the

participants told their stories, questions to clarify events, experiences, meanings and understandings were asked so that a richer, in-depth account of each participant's life story could be obtained. The life stories of the participants were audio-taped with the permission of the participants.

2.5.2. The Follow-Up Interview

A follow-up interview was held with each participant. Each interview lasted approximately thirty minutes. The interpretations that were made through the analysis of the interview data were presented to the participants. The researcher requested the participants to provide feedback on the interpretations that were formulated in order to determine if there was congruence between the understandings of the researcher and the conceptions of the participants.

The follow-up interviews provided the opportunity for participants to identify and elucidate any misconceptions about their life histories. It served the purpose of eliminating the misinterpretations that were made by the researcher. This enabled the researcher to provide a more detailed and coherent account of their life histories.

2.6. Narrative Analysis

After the transcripts were transcribed the accurateness of each transcript was confirmed by comparing it to the audio recording of the interview. This is perceived as important as "words provide the fundamental data on which all analysis would be based" (Mergendoller, 1989, p. 124). The transcribed stories were read repeatedly until the researcher was totally familiar with the participants' life accounts.

Narrative analysis was adopted in order to explore the data. Narrative analysis includes the gathering of events and occurrences, which are then combined by means of a plot into a story. The story formed by narrative assimilation allows the integration of the ideas of human intentions and choice. The effects of a narrative analysis is an explanation that shows how

past events are linked together to account for the final outcome. This explanation is retrospective. It accounts for how outcomes might have come about. Narrative analysis combines or configures events into a description of, for example, how an individual made a career choice (Polkinghorne, 1988). A holistic-content approach was adopted during the analysis of the data. The holistic approach takes an individual's life history as a whole and parts of the text are interpreted in the context of other parts of the narrative. The holistic-content approach uses the complete life story of an individual and emphasises the content presented by it. The researcher analyses the meaning of the parts in distinct sections of the story in light of content that surfaces from the rest of the story or in the context of the whole story (Lieblich, Tuval-Mashiach & Zilber, 1998). This approach was valuable to the study as the study aimed to explore the individuals as wholes as well as their development to the current study's position.

The narrative approach emphasises the links that individuals make in describing their own life history (Hollway & Jefferson, 2000). With the addition of a psychodynamic approach this study, however, also wanted to explore and interpret the links that were not conscious to the participants and therefore go beyond the narrative. Jacobs (1998, p. 12) sees analysis as "peeling away externals to discover the workings of the unconscious and the effects on it of past experiences and earlier relationships." Hollway and Jefferson (2000) emphasise the necessity to make links between the unconnected information of their life histories. Inserting importance into segments of the participants' life accounts may produce new links of how their past have shaped their present motivations. An interpretive approach was thus taken to the life histories of the participants, allowing the researcher to interpret how the participants' life experiences have influenced and shaped their present life experiences and how they have also shaped the meanings individuals have given to themselves and to their experiences (Denzin, 1989). The narrative approach acknowledges the significant role of the researcher in interpreting the data (Hatch & Wisniewski, 1995). Given that the aim of the current study is also to explore the motivation of the participants, their life experiences will be interpreted with reference to how these experiences have radically shaped their motivation to become volunteer counsellors.

The study adopted an interpretivist analysis as the "interpretation of meaning is the central theme with the specification of the kinds of meaning sought and attention to the questions posed to the text" (Kvale, 1996, p. 38). The purpose of using the interpretivist analysis was to

obtain a valid and common comprehension of the meaning of the text. The development of an interpretive account was to record and analyse the interviews to “make sense of the participants’ world by organising one’s understandings and preunderstandings of the participants’ understanding of their world into a cohesive, narrative account” (Packer & Addison, 1989, p. 43). It centred on life experiences that have completely shaped and influenced their motivation. Bloom and Munro (1995) conclude that interpreting life history narratives as a process increases, rather than lessens, the understanding of the lives explored.

2.7. Reflexivity

As the researcher is intricately involved in the organisation, which was the focus of the study, the issue of reflexivity needed to be addressed. Qualitative research, on the one hand, is a reflective procedure where the obtainment of knowledge and learning can occur. Researchers can learn and understand more about themselves. On the other hand, “qualitative research is also value-laden” (Hendricks, 1998, p. 22). In the course of conducting the research, the researcher adopted the providential skill of reflection. The researcher acknowledged that it was pivotal to retain an objective frame of mind throughout the research process as convoluted emotions may be evoked during the study. Thus, the researcher needed to contain these emotions in an appropriate manner.

2.8. Ethical Considerations

There are several ethical issues that needed to be considered while conducting this research. Before each interview participants were given a consent form explaining the aims of the study (see Appendix A.). After reading the consent form the participants had the opportunity to decide whether or not they wished to participate in the study. In addition, participants were assured that everything discussed in the interview would be kept confidential. The researcher ensured anonymity by not providing any information about the participants in the dissertation report such as names of the participants or any other identifying information. Unresolved, sensitive, or painful issues may have been brought up in the interviews (Grafanaki, 1996). Thus, the researcher attempted to approach these issues with sensitivity and judgement. The interview transcripts and the dissertation report will be available for those participants who wish to see it. Feedback was given to the organisation about the progress of the dissertation and a copy of the dissertation report will be provided to the organisation once completed.

CHAPTER 3:

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Introduction

A summary of each participant's life history will firstly be provided. The participants' life narratives will then be described in three parts: childhood, adolescence and adulthood. Discussing each life segment separately allows a more detailed and richer account of the participants' life experiences to be obtained.

The interest has been in what is common to these accounts rather than how they differ from each other. Therefore commonalities in each life segments will be identified and explored. Within the discussion of these commonalities, each life story will include significant events and experiences that have had an influential impact on the participants' lives as well as the meanings that they have given to these experiences. The impact that these events and experiences had on the participants' motivation to become counsellors will be explored. In analysing the data, links between past experiences and current motivations will be made explicit.

In order to ensure confidentiality pseudonyms were given to each participant in order to protect their identities.

3.2. Narrative Summaries

3.2.1. Case Study A: Victoria

Victoria is a thirty-four year old, White female. She was born in Cape Town and is the eldest of three children. Victoria described herself as an illegitimate child and defined her childhood as a traumatic one due to the violent environment to which she was exposed. Her stepfather physically and emotionally abused her. Victoria has never known her biological father and her stepfather poorly replaced the paternal role. The discovery that her stepfather was not her

natural father was a complete shock to her and introduced confusion and anger into her life. Victoria described the manner in which the aggressive family dynamics caused difficulties for her. She experienced periods of depression during her adolescence. She described that she did not receive love and care at home and thereby used sexual intercourse as a medium of obtaining affection. She became sexually active at a young age and consequently fell pregnant at the age of eighteen. Victoria got married at the age of twenty-one and has two children. Victoria was initially involved in administrative work for many years but for the last five years has been studying psychology. Her ultimate goal is to complete her degree to become a psychologist. She has been a counsellor at the Cape Town centre for approximately five years.

3.2.2. Case Study B: Anne

Anne is a forty-three year old, White female. She was born in Libya and she has two siblings. At the age of five her family immigrated to Kwazulu-Natal so that she could commence school. She described her childhood as a happy one. However, the different personalities of family members introduced difficulties for her. Her father was diagnosed with a bi-polar disorder and her mother was very domineering and overbearing. Due to the caring nature that she possessed she studied to become a nurse. Anne got married when she was twenty-two years old and has two sons. When she became a mother at the age of twenty-six she decided to discontinue nursing in order to enjoy motherhood. Her parents were divorced at this time and this was very difficult for her to understand and accept. Anne moved to Cape Town seven years ago. After the birth of her second child she wrote a spiritual novel questioning the meaning of life and death and for the last three years has been a counsellor at the Cape Town centre. In addition, she is completing an advanced counselling course through the University of South Africa.

3.2.3. Case Study C: Rebecca

Rebecca is a sixty-three year old, White female. She was born in England and has an elder sister. At the age of eleven her family immigrated to Zimbabwe. She got married at the age of nineteen and has four sons. In their fifth year of marriage she and her husband decided to

immigrate to South Africa. This change was hard and challenging for her. They bought a partnership in a veterinary hospital and worked there for approximately twenty-six years. When Rebecca turned fifty she began to feel the strain of the business and as a result she retired. Her early retirement generated a void in her life. She wanted to use her time fruitfully and decided to become involved in volunteer work. She is currently a volunteer at Saint Lukes Hospice and has been a counsellor at the Cape Town centre for six years.

3.2.4. Case Study D: Kate

Kate is a sixty-year old, Coloured female who was born in Cape Town. Kate described her family as stable and warm. She has three sisters and two brothers. She described her childhood as a happy one with close bonds amongst her family members. Kate got married when she was twenty-two years old and has three children. When she gave birth to her second child her parents got divorced. The divorce was a distressing event in her life as it shattered her belief that her family was devoted to each other. After completing school Kate completed a secretarial course. She worked in numerous jobs until she obtained a secretarial job at NICRO, a crime prevention organisation, where she worked for approximately thirteen years. After working at NICRO she obtained a position at the Bishop Lavis centre where she eventually became a counsellor. She has been working at the Bishop Lavis centre for approximately seven years.

3.2.5. Case Study E: Dulce

Dulce is a fifty-five year old, Coloured female. She was born in Cape Town and is the eldest of eight children. Her father was Muslim and her mother was Christian and she was brought up as a Christian. Coming from a poor background caused Dulce to appreciate everything in life and equipped her with the strength to cope with her future. She did not complete school as she had to assist her mother in raising her siblings. Dulce got married when she was twenty-eight years old and has three children. The initial stages of her marriage was filled with struggles as the couple started off relatively poor. Despite the difficulties she described her life as happy and fulfilling. Dulce was a housewife until the age of thirty-four and thereafter

decided to do a secretarial course. She worked at a clothing company for approximately fifteen years and found it a learning experience. For the last two years she has been a counsellor at the Bishop Lavis centre.

3.2.6. Case Study F: Christine

Christine is a thirty-two year old, Coloured female who was born in Cape Town and is an only child. She was raised by her grandparents and she believed that her mother was her sister and her grandmother was her mother. Christine was sexually abused as a child and in addition, was also exposed to the physical abuse her grandmother endured by her grandfather. Christine described that she never questioned these events in her childhood because she thought that it was normal. Despite the traumas which she endured she described her childhood as a happy one and that she was content as a child. At the age of fifteen she experienced her first sexual encounter and consequently fell pregnant. Her family decided that an abortion would be the appropriate action to take. Christine described how this event compelled her to complete school. At the age of twenty-five Christine got married and had two children. During her first year of marriage she studied dental assisting and worked for approximately two years at a dentistry in Camps Bay. Her decision to discontinue working was influenced by her desire to be a full-time mother. Subsequently, this left her with a substantial amount of free time and she decided to utilise this time by helping others. Christine has been a counsellor at the Bishop Lavis centre for approximately two years and also performs voluntary work at NICRO.

3.3. Life History and Motivation

3.3.1. Childhood:

Victoria, Christine, Anne, Rebecca, Kate, and Dulce each began their accounts in childhood. They recounted significant experiences and events and described their childhood selves. Events were recalled due to the pivotal role which they played in shaping their experiences. Childhood was described by some as a period of struggle, embraced with difficulties and obstacles. For example, the occurrence of physical or sexual abuse in the family damaged some of the participants' experiences while poverty caused financial limitations for others.

Talking about childhood stimulated recollections of significant others, mainly parents and primary caregivers. These stories were centred around their relationships with their primary caretakers and how these relationships shaped their experiences. The quality and quantity of emotional and physical care was also described.

Two common themes emerged from the participants' stories. The first was the nature and effect of the participants' relationship with their fathers or father figures and the second was the effect of the relationship that they had with their mothers or mother figures. The subsequent discussion will describe how the participants' relationship with their primary caregivers had specific effects on them becoming counsellors.

3.3.1.1. The Relationship with the Father/Father Figure

A common thread between the participants' childhood memories was the significant impact that their fathers or father figures had on their lives. Victoria, Christine, Rebecca, Kate, and Anne described this impact as destructive while Dulce described her father's influence as positive. The role of the father figure, whether active or non-existent, shaped their childhood experiences.

Victoria and Christine both experienced the physical absence of their biological fathers in their lives and have never had any contact with them. They described that this absence caused

a void in their childhood. This role was filled by a father figure, which in the case of Victoria was her stepfather and for Christine was her grandfather. The accounts of their childhood relationships with their father figures were characterised by a lack of nurturance and warmth. These relationships were devoid of affection and care. They commented that their father figures did not provide the protection and safety that childhood is supposed to offer. This triggered emotions of anger, disappointment and regret towards these men for diminishing their overall enjoyment of childhood.

During their storytelling, it became apparent, that their childhood experiences were characterised by violence and continual fighting. Victoria described how her childhood was shattered and disrupted with the physical and emotional abuse she endured from her stepfather. The discovery that her stepfather was not her biological father was distressing and hurtful as she experienced an immense amount of rage towards him for abusing her. Victoria explains:

"He hit a lot. I was hit from as far back as I can remember. But you know that was traumatic for me because he used to lecture me before he hit. So I knew what was coming and it was very scary for me to be in this room on my own with this man, this big man."

Christine's narrative also emphasised the effects of being exposed to the abuse. Her grandfather was an alcoholic who was described as aggressive and brutal and who physically abused her grandmother. She never formed a relationship with him due to his hostile and abusive nature.

In reflecting on these past experiences, Victoria and Christine commented on how this seemed 'normal' at the time. As Christine explains:

"But I also felt that that was something that I could cope with and I mean as a child you think well, that's normal, that's what it is supposed to feel like. So you don't see anything wrong with it at the time."

However, in retrospect, both Victoria and Christine realise that their childhood was traumatic. Christine explains:

"But as you get older and you get to know other children or other families then only you realise it's not supposed to be like this. But you don't question it as a child."

Victoria describes the emotional damage of being abused:

"I think that my spirit was very battered."

While Victoria and Christine did not know their biological fathers, Rebecca and Kate experienced their father's prolonged absences. Rebecca's father could not play an active role in her upbringing as he was in the British Air force. She was a war baby and as a result he was not present from when she was eight months old till the age of five. Kate's father, on the other hand, was a builder and continuously left to seek work in other cities. Rebecca said that the absence of her father did not produce intense difficulties for her as a child. The consistent manner in which Rebecca constructs her childhood is characterised by an account of constantly obtaining affection, love and support from her extended family members. Her grandfather, with whom she had a good relationship, became her father figure. The absence of Kate's father caused a void in her childhood and prompted the formation of close bonds with her mother and her siblings.

Rebecca was five years old when her father returned from the war and Kate was in her early years of childhood when her father ceased to seek work in other cities. They both described that the re-emergence of their fathers into their lives caused difficulties. Their fathers' active involvement entailed being strict and enforcing discipline. This triggered feelings of anger and annoyance towards their fathers, as they were uncomfortable with changes which they enforced.

Kate felt anger and irritation towards her father for not providing her the freedom and independence during their childhood. She explains:

"At that time I thought my father was the worst father under the sun because he was so strict with us and not allowing us around and things like that."

Whilst Rebecca and Kate's stories highlighted the absence of their fathers, Anne's account described her father's presence as unreal because he was not emotionally present. He suffered from a bi-polar disorder and therefore played a passive role in the family. He was submissive and subservient while her mother was domineering. Anne described how she valued her father due to the troublesome relationship she had with her mother. She explains:

"I saw him as the injured party, as poor daddy, always working hard and my mom is always hack, hack, hack, hacking him."

Anne elucidated how the distant and problematic relationship she had with her father affected her emotionally throughout her childhood. Her construction of her life story demonstrated the continual disappointment she had with her father. She described how his silent presence distressed her throughout her life. She desired his endorsement and support when confronting her mother who had the biggest influence in creating the guilt and sense of responsibility which she experienced throughout her childhood. Anne desired his 'real' presence, support and care. Anne's need for support and a sense of belonging facilitated her decision to become a nurse and subsequently a counsellor.

Dulce's relationship with her father had a positive impact on her childhood. She expressed gratitude for her father's active presence in her childhood and described the significant part he performed in her life. However, whilst describing this relationship, memories of experiencing difficulties with her father were evoked. She described her difficulty in understanding her father's religion and its dictates. This complexity occasionally caused problems during her childhood as she struggled to deal with these expectations. Dulce explains this difficulty:

"I never understood the Muslim religion really because my dad didn't marry a Muslim woman who knew all the rights and the wrongs of the faith.... And their faith was you've got to do this and that. You've got to wear dresses by your ankles. Your face has got to always be covered. So I never knew these things."

In retrospect, the past relationship with her father, however, shaped her belief that individuals can overcome differences and helped her with her future work experiences.

In reviving their childhood memories the immediacy of their relationships with their fathers or father figures were highlighted. Their past wounds were intrinsic to their stories and to their self-construction in their story-telling. Victoria, Christine, Rebecca, Kate, and Anne's motivation to be counsellors is an egoistic one. They have a strong need to help individuals who are in troubled waters. By helping others it satisfies an intense need to help themselves. The psychodynamic approach would acknowledge that these participants are influenced by their past relationships with their fathers or father figures and this influence is a possible reason that drove them to become caregivers.

Frank and Paris (1987) would acknowledge that these participants were motivated to become counsellors due to their unhappy childhood, which was marked with distress with their fathers or father figures. Gibson et al. (2002) would similarly recognise that these participants

became caregivers because it links them to their own life experiences. Most importantly it can link Victoria and Christine to their traumatic childhood relationship with their father figures. It can alleviate their emotional pain and help them deal with their past suffering. As these participants had not healed from their past, their childhood memories were constantly flooding their adult minds. They carried the wounds of their past, which reverberated in their adulthood.

It is evident that Victoria and Christine have become wounded healers. They are driven by a personal need to heal others in order to heal from their own painful and difficult experiences such as their abuse (Gibson et al., 2002). Through counselling others they can be connected to their childhood experiences and then consequently be able to work through their unresolved issues.

In terms of Anna Freud's theory (1936, cited in Ekstein, 1978) Victoria and Christine's sense of altruism could be seen as symptoms of inner conflict. Their positive behaviour of volunteering is understood as being in reality reaction formations, and probably defenses against their impulses of anger and aggression. Furthermore, she would acknowledge their development of defenses in order to resolve unconscious impulses into its conflicting, explicit counterparts. The psychoanalytic theory would probably recognise that Victoria and Christine are altruistic surrenders, in which their interests are inferior to those of others, as a type of resolution of their inner struggles. Their inner struggle to understand and heal from their past caused the development of altruistic symptoms and personality modifications. Their prosocial acts are essentially a result of tragic guilt and implicit aggression (Freud, 1936, cited in Ekstein, 1978).

Victoria, Christine, Rebecca, Kate, and Anne recalled their relations with their fathers or father figures as destroying their childhood experiences and impeding their development as individuals. They described how their fathers or father figures negatively influenced them throughout their lives. However, it became apparent that this relationship also had an influential role in them becoming counsellors. Merodoulaki (1994, cited in Holmes, 1999) would identify that the relationship between the participants and their fathers or father figures in childhood was an important, influential factor in them becoming involved in counselling work. Furthermore, Merodoulaki (1994, cited in Holmes, 1999) would recognise that Rebecca, Kate, and Anne's childhood was difficult, challenging and intricate mainly due to

the separation they experienced from their fathers. Their fathers' absence played a pivotal role in them becoming counsellors.

Victoria highlighted her father's influential role. The abusive and troublesome relationship she had with her stepfather influenced her to study psychology and ultimately become a counsellor. By studying psychology Victoria could identify with her life history and thereby uncover her childhood. Some participants expressed the necessity to explore their past. Hayes (2002) would concur that their desire to work through their past is imperative. They must be familiar with the pathway from their mind to their inner self, as they cannot draw therapeutically on personal experiences without an active and enduring interest in their own history. They considered it necessary to come to terms with their painful past before they can help others to do the same.

Christine also described the impact that her father figure had on her way of thinking and the manner in which she perceives her past events and experiences. During Christine's construction of her life story her inclination to draw out the positive from the negative became apparent. This was demonstrated throughout her story telling and commenced when Christine described her troublesome childhood as a happy one. In order to heal from her past, negative moments are reversed so that they typify something positive. Her past life events are described as beneficial even if their positive nature may have been disputable at the time. She seeks to discover how events and experiences can benefit her as an individual.

According to Krebs and Van Hesteren (1992) the participants' cognitive structures allow them to perceive events and provide their experiences with value. In addition, these structures render modes of meaning making that guide and organise their behaviour. The meaning and significance they have assigned to these events are integrally linked to their perceptions of themselves and others. This became evident in their narrative, as they defined themselves through their significant, past relationships. Krebs and Van Hesteren (1992) would acknowledge that the way in which the participants see themselves and others and the social and moral associations between them give rise to the type of altruism they possess.

Victoria, Christine, Rebecca, Kate, Anne, and Dulce's understanding of events generate and structure their emotional states, which in turn, gives rise to their equivalent motives (Krebs & Van Hesteren, 1992). The participants are constantly motivated to act in ways that are

uniform with their values and perceptions of themselves. Victoria described how she became emotionally equipped to find out who she was separate to all her past events and experiences. Krebs and Van Hesteren (1992) would acknowledge that the value the participants place on their perception of themselves are altruistic and moral, which may have provoked their behaviours that support these self-perceptions.

Puka (1994) would acknowledge that these participants possess a sense of altruism as they have acquired an elevated level of understanding to their own nature as well as an understanding of their attributes. Furthermore, Puka (1994) would see how they have to be inwardly expansive in order to be outwardly expansive. The participants would be seen as having altruistic qualities as altruists possess a well-developed self-concept (Puka, 1994).

3.3.1.2. The Relationship with the Mother/Mother Figure

In the participants' account of their childhood, discussions of their relationships with their mothers or mother figures occurred. Victoria, Anne, Dulce, and Christine each described how their negative relationships with their mothers or mother figures shaped their childhood experiences. Rebecca and Kate, on the other hand, described how their mothers had a positive effect on their lives. It was noted how the language used by the participants to depict their relationship with their mothers or mother figures was laden with affect as opposed to the mechanical and instrumental language used to describe their relationship with their fathers or father figures.

Victoria, Anne, Dulce, and Christine described the destructive influence that their mothers or mother figures had on their childhood and how this negative influence shaped their motivation to become lay counsellors. During Victoria's childhood she felt anger and resentment towards her mother for turning a blind eye to her stepfather abusing her. She explains:

"My mother always used to leave me. She used to go and stand on the balcony because she couldn't stand to hear my cries... And I think I felt very abandoned by my mom then."

This sense of 'abandonment' was exacerbated by her feelings that her mother did not want her and that she was an impediment in her mother's life. However, in retrospect, she acknowledged that this experience made her 'fight harder' for her sense of self. This 'fight' motivated her to help others with similar struggles.

Anne's childhood was similarly characterised by conflict with her mother. She described how her mother liked things done in a particular manner and if her expectations were not met, she would provide the 'silent treatment' to the family. Anne described how her annoyance towards her mother arose when she was not allowed to verbally express herself. She described how her uncertainty of where she stood with her mother as well as the way in which her mother's personality affected the rest of the family were low experiences of her life. However, Anne's account was peppered with ambivalent feelings toward her mother as she was also capable of showing love and compassion toward her. Anne explains:

"Although she had her little tantrums she was the one that stuck us all together. That if we would cry we would go to her and she'd put her arms around us and hug us and love us. And I mean she was a wonderful mother. When I talk about that sulkiness and all that, that perhaps stands out in my mind which is a bit unfair."

Family members were portrayed as having different and distinctive personalities. It was the family's different and complex ways of thinking and behaving that developed Anne's characteristic of always wanting and needing to please other individuals. Her parents' contrasting and conflicting personalities caused her to possess these attributes and consequently made her experience feelings of guilt when she was not satisfying those in her surrounding environment. Anne explains:

"And then of course came the whole thing that you know these feelings you don't express, so you repress them and it sort of comes out in sort of other ways, pleasing and feeling guilty if someone is upset with you know."

During her upbringing she constantly thought that she was at fault when family members, especially her mother, were unhappy and despondent. Anne's childhood relationships caused her to possess a people-pleasing nature. This motive generated a need to repair.

Anne describes this need:

"All my sort of feelings like being a people's pleaser and feeling guilty and wanting to always help others I realise came from the fact that I was never sure where she (mother) was coming from.... I think it might be compounded by the environment that I was brought up in."

Like Victoria and Anne, Dulce and Christine also expressed negative emotions towards their mothers during their childhood. Dulce possessed feelings of anger and annoyance towards her mother for being restricted and conservative. Her mother did not permit her to enjoy her childhood to her fullest. Dulce explains:

"I said at that time I was angry at her. Why can't I go play? Why can't I do this? Why can't I do that? I won't say I had a horrible youth but I had a difficult youth because I was always struggling to come to terms with the certain things she wouldn't allow me to do."

Being the eldest child she consequently had to assist her mother in running the family household. She described how becoming a 'mother figure' to her siblings made her childhood 'sad to a certain extent.' She explains:

"Being the eldest I always had to get the short end of the stick, so to speak."

Dulce therefore matured prematurely in order to assist her mother in providing stability and care to her siblings. She described that being a 'mother hen' to her siblings disrupted her experience of a carefree, fun period that childhood offers. Dulce commented that because of this role she developed a 'motherly instinct.' She links this 'instinct' to her desire to help others.

Christine described that she was raised believing that her grandmother was her mother and her mother was her sister. Her mother was very young when she fell pregnant and she was not emotionally and financially able to care for her. Her mother's absence during her childhood did not disturb her as a child, as her grandmother became her mother figure and her needs were being met. As a result a close bond was established with her grandmother and she became a significant part of her life. Christine discovered the truth about this relationship when she was six years old. She described how learning the truth was a shock for her because it produced uncertainties in her life. Due to this Christine and her biological mother have never established a close and open relationship. Being a witness to the abuse of her grandmother was a traumatic experience for her but also egoistically motivated her to help women who are in violent relationships. While Christine was growing up she may have

experienced feelings of helplessness and guilt when she could not do anything to help her grandmother. She continuously observed the abusive actions of her grandfather and was not able to prevent the abuse. Even though Christine was not able to do something in her past she is now able to do something in her present. She can assist abused women in similar situations and as a result she is not helpless in her present.

Rebecca and Kate did not include in-depth accounts of their relationship with their mothers. They described these relationships as providing them with stability and nurturance. Throughout Rebecca and Kate's life stories they expressed admiration and respect for their mothers. Rebecca reported that her mother was one of the significant people in her life. She describes why:

"My mother was incredible for us. And she was an undemanding mom and an undemanding granny. But she was my big influence."

An 'undemanding' mother to Rebecca is someone who understands her true personality and attempts to not irrevocably shape her life experiences.

Kate revealed her own gratitude for the unique relationship she had with her mother. Financial limitations caused certain struggles in her family life. Due to her father's absence her mother had the strain of managing family life. Kate expressed her appreciation towards her mother as she still managed to celebrate special occasions during these difficult times.

Victoria, Anne, Christine and Dulce's motivation to become involved in counselling stems from their distressing past relationships with their mothers. Dryden and Spurling (1989) would acknowledge that their intense, personal need to help others is closely connected with their own healing and growth. By helping others they are able to help themselves heal from their distressing past relationships with their mothers. Zagier Roberts (1994) would see that these participants had this specific need in order to somehow connect with their past lives. Counselling others has been the vehicle for them to return to their past. It has provided them with the opportunity to work through their unresolved issues particularly their troublesome and damaging relationships they had with their caregivers. The drive to effect reparation in the participants' lives is the principal motive for them becoming involved in care work.

Gibson et al. (2002) would recognise that these participants have become wounded healers. Miller and Baldwin (1987) would maintain that deep within these participants lie their

internal wounds, which is a fundamental factor in the healing of others. The transference of their wounds onto others is an unconscious process and results when both the participants and the patient share commonalities in experiences and consciously or unconsciously identify with one other. According to Hayes (2002) sensitive and empathic listening can occur as the content spoken by the speaker is invested with private meaning by the participants. When they make use of the channel that runs from their ears to their souls it opens up the possibility of profound empathic awareness and understanding. Hayes (2002) would identify that their own personal experience becomes a well from which they can draw.

Some of the participants' accounts evoked painful memories. Dryden and Spurling (1989) would conceive this painful suffering as a resource given that it sensitises one to the suffering of others. Pain and sadness is seen as that which gives them strength. Christine described how witnessing the abuse throughout her childhood altruistically motivated her to help women in domestic violent situations. This violent past experience formulated an unselfish desire that needed to be fulfilled. Christine explains her ability to connect with abused women:

"Everything that I've went through has brought me to this, where I am. I was supposed to go through that to get here. It's like that was low points but I'm stronger and I needed to go through that to get to this point because working with abused women I know what it's all about. I've lived through it."

According to Miller and Baldwin (1987) the paradox of one who heals and yet remains wounded applies to Christine. Through helping abused women she is able to continuously deal with her own past feelings of helplessness, hopelessness and guilt and overall it helps her to deal with the traumatic past experience of being witness to her grandmother's abuse.

Some participants conveyed their need to not repeat their past. The past that Anne experienced has allowed her to create the present that she desires and also the present that she does not want. Anne does not want to treat her loved ones the way she was treated as a child. Dryden and Spurling (1989) would recognise Anne's determination to understand her difficult experiences as a means of not repeating the mistakes of her childhood. Due to her parents not having the vital marital communication Anne was determined to have an effective communication base in her marriage and family. Anne wants to ensure that she can communicate and listen to her husband even if it is something that she is not prepared to hear.

Hence her need to do counselling materialised, as she wanted to learn the necessary counselling skills in order to accomplish this.

While some participants discussed what they would like to change in their past and present, others discussed what they had lost. According to Crouch (1997) the demands of growing up and leaving behind earlier stages of life to adopt new roles is difficult and challenging. Dulce had to deal with the reality of loss and change. Jacobs (1998) would see that Dulce's loss has lived on inside of her and created a need to replace that which was lost.

Anne went beyond the family's influence and discussed her occupational domain. The psychodynamic approach would acknowledge that she was drawn to do nursing in order to deal with her past. According to Stokes (1994) Anne was drawn to work in this setting as it provided her with the opportunity to work through her own unresolved issues. She was drawn to the profession of care work partly because of her unconscious predisposition.

3.3.2. Adolescence:

3.3.2.1. Traumatic Experience

All the women gave an account of the events and experiences that stood out in their adolescent years. One striking similarity is that they found the transition from adolescence to adulthood of increasing difficulty due to traumatic or distressing experiences. These traumas ranged from having an abortion, experiencing depression, the occurrence of accidents, or being maltreated by school peers. Each participant noted that they were not emotionally equipped to deal with their trauma during these years.

Christine's traumatic experience was an abortion which she endured during her adolescence. The memory of her abortion sparked the memory of being sexually abused during her childhood by a friend of her family. She recalls that at that time she believed that the abuse was a 'normal' part of her childhood. Christine explained that she never reported the abuse to anyone because of her feelings of guilt and fear and her belief that there was some willingness from her side.

Christine explains:

“Also not saying anything about it. Also knowing that this is a secret and nothing should be said about it. But not also feeling that there’s something wrong. That this is the way that it’s supposed to be.”

Christine explained that her perception of the abuse as ‘normal’ escalated her curiosity about her own sexuality. Her first sexual encounter was at the age of fifteen and she consequently fell pregnant. When Christine discovered that she was pregnant she felt abandoned and lonely with the possession of this secret. This lonely feeling was equivalent to what she felt as a child. She eventually informed her mother and grandmother about her pregnancy and they decided that an abortion was the appropriate solution to take. In retrospect, she wished that she were cognisant of the counselling services that society provides as she longed for someone to listen to her distress. Christine describes that she presently wants to help distressed individuals so that they have an opportunity to talk about and deal with their own painful traumas.

Victoria described her experience of depression during her adolescent years. This experience was traumatic, as she did not have the social and emotional support to deal with her illness. Victoria’s depression started when she discovered that her stepfather was not her biological father and subsequently worsened while she grew older. During this time she felt isolated and abandoned. She describes this time of her life:

“As a child you cope, you think this is life and this is what your family’s like. But as a teenager all those pent up emotions kind of come to the surface. I really faced dark days at the time.”

Anne and Dulce recalled the difficulties, which they experienced while at school and how this impacted on their adolescent years. Anne described how during her first year of high school, her peers ignored her for a long period of time. The ‘silent treatment’ that she received from her mother was echoed in her relationships with her peers. She describes this period:

“So as a teenager when you are desperately trying to make friends, that was absolutely horrific. It was like a form of bullying, well victimisation as I wasn’t sort of spoken to.”

Anne described how this period affected her overall experience of adolescence. She describes how she never felt the 'same' after this experience. This event created the feeling of being isolated in high school as she felt that she did not belong in her group of peers. Consequently she never enjoyed her schooling years and almost 'packaged' school. She expressed her eagerness to 'move on.'

While Anne struggled with her peer relationships, Dulce's dream of acquiring an education was lost when she left school at the age of sixteen. The birth of her twin siblings precipitated her departure as she needed to assist her mother in caring for her siblings. She described how this loss became the saddest part of her life and how her future could have been different if her dream was achieved. Dulce explains:

"And still today if I think about it, it hurts because I could have achieved so much...And there's nothing I'm sad about in life, really except the fact that I couldn't finish my Matric. I would have loved to do it."

Rebecca's adolescence was overshadowed by a serious horse accident she endured at the age of sixteen. She described this accident as traumatic, as she did not know whether she would be able to walk again. Rebecca was unable to ride horses for an extensive period of time. She described that the accident stole her freedom and passion for riding and that she never rode with the same regard.

Kate's experience of adolescence was marred by her father's serious car accident. He did not work for an extensive period of time as his recuperation lasted approximately six months. Kate's family struggled financially as well as emotionally during this time. During the period of her father's recuperation she was able to build a relationship with him and he taught her to be fully independent and to reach her full potential. Her father's influence inspired her to be self-determining in her future. This event made her and her family realise that life outcomes do not transpire the way you expect it to. Kate realised that life incorporates good events as well as bad events and acknowledged that she might endure difficult periods and hardships in her life. The accident unified their family as they acknowledged that while life events can be troublesome they would still have the family as a support base. This experience motivated her to provide similar support to people who are in a crisis and do not have any social support. She wants individuals to acknowledge that life can be overthrown by bad events and

experiences but can be restored by the good ones. Kate described how she wants to convey the significance of life to distressed individuals so that they can see beyond the negative.

Christine, Victoria, Anne, Rebecca, and Kate described how their traumas did not completely violate the construction of themselves and how they somehow ‘accepted’ or ‘understood’ their traumas while Dulce, on the other hand, described the ‘loss’ that she experienced.

Christine described how her account of her abortion caused the awareness of her total acceptance of her abuse. She explains this awareness:

“To me it’s just, I’ve accepted it. It’s done. It’s been done and I’ve accepted it and maybe that was for the best. And also maybe I’m stronger for what I’ve gone through.”

The possible tragedy of ‘losing’ a child did not seem to carry throughout her account. What marks her account is not the nature or amount of pain and suffering but the attitude shown towards it. Suffering, according to Christine, is seen as having been lived through and survived. Her perception of her sexual abuse and her abortion exemplifies this way of thinking. Her past traumas taught her how to capture the valuable knowledge that needs to be gained from each experience. The tendency to learn from her life experiences is her healing. The knowledge she obtained from being sexually abused was the insight of what sexually abused individuals can endure and the nature and personality of the abuser. Christine currently endeavours to help others to deal and learn from their past. Her aim is to not allow their traumas to overwhelm them and as a result override their life.

Each participant recounted the suffering and pain that they endured. Dryden and Spurling (1989) would see the participants’ pain or sadness as having intricate meaning. Suffering is what has given them strength. Throughout their life narratives it was clear to see that the participants possessed an unselfish need to provide help and support to individuals that are enduring similar problems. The participants’ experiences thus created an altruistic motive to help individuals in crisis. Dryden and Spurling (1989) would acknowledge that their past suffering is a resource for them to do so. Through their endurance of pain they are able to understand the pain of others. The participants perceive these painful events as making them stronger individuals and equipping them with the skills to help other individuals with similar experiences.

Due to the participants experiencing numerous traumas they are able to connect with individuals they counsel in a unique and certain way. They have the understanding of where these individuals are coming from and what they are enduring. Frank and Paris (1987) would perceive that these participants are individuals who have known and convey the wounds of psychological pain and are thereby able to understand the pain in others. Experiencing traumas in their lives has provided them with an altruistic nature comprising of genuine feelings of compassion and understanding.

Helping individuals cope with their own traumas may furthermore assist the participants to continuously deal with their own specific traumas. Gibson et al. (2002) would call these participants wounded healers. The participants acknowledged that they have accepted their painful past experiences but counselling others may allow them to carry on doing so. Dryden and Spurling (1989) and Gibson et al. (2002) would see that these participants remain caregivers in order to carry on healing from their past. They have the egoistic need to help others deal with their traumas in order for them to continuously heal, learn and grow. Clary et al. (1998) would see that this need to grow corresponds to their fifth function of volunteering. This function involves a motivational function that focuses on the growth and development of their ego.

Christine, Victoria, and Kate expressed their need to provide support to individuals who lack a support base. By being counsellors they are able to provide emotional support to individuals in need and prevent them from experiencing feelings of loneliness. Victoria explains her motivation:

“So that they don’t feel as alone as what I felt at one point as a teenager.”

Dryden and Spurling (1989) would acknowledge that these participants’ need to become the therapist they never had as the vehicle to provide the means to repair or mend the difficulties existent in their adolescence. Furthermore they would see that if Christine, Victoria, and Kate have become the therapist they never had then they have already become a therapist for others.

Supporting and listening to individuals fulfils some of the participants’ egoistic need for self-fulfillment. Satisfying this selfish need could be a reason why they remain caregivers.

Kate describes this reward:

“Rewarding that that person hasn’t just thrown in the towel and just given up on life. Rewarding in the sense that they were motivated by just speaking to somebody.”

Some of the participants described how they feel beneficial when an individual can reveal their life dilemmas to them. They find it profoundly rewarding to help individuals cope and deal with their troubles. Rebecca and Kate described how feeling appreciated by the individuals they help is deeply fulfilling. When they make a difference in individuals’ lives they experience a sense of worth. Kate explains:

“I thoroughly enjoy doing things for people that appreciate things being done, you know, or just being there to help somebody. It gives me a lot. It makes me feel worthy that I can be there for the next person.”

3.3.3. Adulthood:

Victoria, Anne, Rebecca, Kate, Dulce, and Christine’s accounts of adulthood were marked by memorable experiences of getting married, having children, and the attendant joys and hardships of being wives and mothers. Painful memories such as parents getting divorced or experiencing loss, often the death of a parent or family member also formed part of their stories about this phase of their lives.

Flowing through their accounts were emotions and events that stood out as significantly influencing their decisions to become volunteer counsellors. Feelings of displacement appeared to be carried from childhood to adulthood. These feelings still resonated in some of the participants’ adult lives while a sense of thankfulness for the unity they shared with their families emerged in others. The loss of employment was a prominent commonality that was found between the participants. Losing contact with society caused their inner selves to be lost. It was noted that significant individuals in some of the participants’ lives alerted them of their ability to listen attentively to others while other participants became individually aware of this skill. The above-mentioned themes had a certain impact on their way of thinking as well as on their actions taken. They possibly influenced and shaped their motivation in numerous ways. An exploration of these influences will be taken in the subsequent section.

3.3.3.1. A Sense of Isolation

Victoria, Anne, and Rebecca described how they experienced a sense of isolation from their families. This separation created a need to have a sense of belonging throughout their lives. It is in their childhood that their sense of separation emerged, causing the silent emergence of their motivation to become caregivers. Their need to belong and social support became transparent and escalated in their adulthood. The following section will firstly explore how this 'sense' arose in their childhood and secondly, how their need to belong in their adulthood had an influencing role in them becoming involved in counselling work.

Victoria, Anne, and Rebecca described feeling secluded, separated, or distant from their families. Their past wounds seemed to consist of or express a sense of isolation. This awareness made them feel abandoned and alone in their experiences. Victoria and Anne's accounts revealed how they believed they did not belong in their family while Rebecca experienced a period of displacement when she immigrated to South Africa.

Victoria and Anne each experienced moments when they believed that they were not members of their families. Victoria described herself as an illegitimate baby. Being cognisant of the fact that she was illegitimate may have caused her to feel disconnected from her family. At the age of six her stepsister was born with Down syndrome and consequently required extra care and attention from her parents. Therefore not much attention could be given to Victoria and a sense of isolation started to emerge. It became evident that her sense of separation escalated when her stepbrother was born when she was thirteen years old. These feelings again resulted from the quantity of attention she received from her parents. An abundant amount of attention was given to her siblings and an insufficient amount was given to her. Victoria explains:

"And then Mathew was born and my father always wanted a son. And then Matthew was normal as well you know. So he was like the second coming – Jesus Christ himself. And literally everybody took second place, everybody. There was only one thing and that was Matthew."

Anne similarly described how her family never identified with her as a person and therefore could not accept her true self. Her intense need to have friends in high school probably

derived from her feeling a sense of isolation in her family. During this time her nursing friends fulfilled and replaced her previous feelings of isolation and fulfilled her need to belong. Anne explains:

“And then the nursing because that’s when maybe for the first time I felt I really belonged. I had a group of friends that accepted me for who I was and maybe my family never saw me for who I was..... And maybe for the first time I was appreciated for who I was. Or I felt that rightly around me.”

Her nursing friends’ acceptance was an enlightening experience for her as her true identity could be acknowledged, revealed and maintained. She was given the space to be herself and the freedom for self-exploration.

Rebecca, in contrast, experienced a different sense of isolation. This ‘sense’ did not involve her family but the environment in which she grew up. When she emigrated from England to Zimbabwe she initially felt displaced. However the emigration affected her in a positive way. When she was young she suffered from chest problems and the new environment drastically improved her bad health. Her chest never affected her again as it became warm and dry. Rebecca described how she thoroughly enjoyed life in Zimbabwe:

“It was very much the bush. But all of us for some reason just took to it like we’d died and gone to heaven.”

She had her freedom and independence and was able to ride horses, which she loved to do and could not do in England.

In Victoria, Anne, and Rebecca’s adult years a sense of isolation and need to belong still lingered. Despite these participants having families of their own, it was evident that this need remained. It was noted how their sense of separateness triggered their desire to become volunteers to possibly understand their separateness from their families or to experience a sense of belonging of their own.

Victoria’s feelings of isolation triggered her fascination with family dynamics. Victoria described how psychology and counselling have allowed her to understand her own family dynamics:

“It’s always been a struggle for me to understand my role in this chaos. How did I get here...obviously I chose this path for a reason. Why? What did I have to learn from it? ...I really liked seeing behind the obvious. I think maybe that was part of my healing. Wanting to

understand what happened in my family. If I could understand the stuff then maybe I could heal from the stuff, you know."

Acquiring this knowledge has allowed Victoria to understand the dynamics of her current family and most importantly not repeat the cycle with her family. Victoria explains her endeavour:

"Because I felt that if I hadn't had gone on this journey, this journey, becoming a counsellor, and becoming a psychologist I think that I wouldn't have got my family. I feel like my knowledge that I've gained has helped me to pass a higher level of awareness in my own family."

Victoria's past family experiences and events have shaped her present family experiences and events. She does not want her past experiences to resonate in her present and has evidently created the family she desires and most importantly never had.

Anne's recurring need to belong re-emerged at a later stage in her adult life. When she stopped nursing her need to belong reverberated in her life. Rebecca gave an account of her complex involvement in her family's life, particularly her husband's. He was a South African polo player and thereby dragged the family into the polo world. This pushed Rebecca to the outskirts of her family's life and triggered a sense of displacement. She explains:

"And maybe I'd feel I'd been on the periphery of the other because it was a powerful family. And I'm not into racing and race riding and that. It wasn't me."

She described feeling like she was on the 'outside'. Being involved in care work has made Rebecca feel like she is on the 'inside.' Her need to belong has been manifestly satisfied through volunteering.

Volunteering has been something that Rebecca can call her own just like what playing polo denotes for her husband. Volunteering is an activity she has embraced upon without the help of her family. She performs these actions for herself and not for her family. Rebecca described how she wants to keep this sector of her life separate from her family:

"That's the strange thing with me. I seem to have separated myself in this area of my life. And I like it to be mine. I can't really explain that. I don't want to share it with the family. I think I have been so involved in sharing everything. That this is mine. I like it."

As Rebecca has been intricately involved with her family she probably lost her sense of self-awareness. She described the ways in which being a counsellor has transformed her. It has provided her with the self-awareness and self-exploration that was once lost. She was able to perceive herself in a much clearer light. Rebecca is egoistically motivated to remain a caregiver in order to continue her self-exploration. Being a caregiver, a counsellor, and a facilitator is like an ongoing journey for her.

While Rebecca described her self-exploration, she also looked at how individuals whom she helps provide her with personal rewards. These personal rewards are principal reasons, which keep Rebecca dedicated to her carework. She explains:

"I don't think there's anything in the ordinary world that can be with that, you know. I'm not going to be in some office and typing. There's nothing in that. But in this kind of work, nursing as such, there is such huge rewards."

Rebecca went on to describe the 'unbelievable' rewards and the fulfillment of her inner needs. It satisfies her egoistic as well as her altruistic needs. She has the need to help the community in some way and volunteering allows her to make this valuable contribution to society. She acknowledges that some good is being done and personal benefits are gained. Rebecca also described feeling appreciated when she is involved in volunteer work:

"And the cards, and some of the words I get back are so affirming you know. So you couldn't actually pay me. You haven't got enough money to pay me for that."

Rebecca has been a wife, a mother and a friend to the significant individuals in her life. However, she has maybe never truly felt appreciated the way volunteering makes her feel. She can experience a sense of worth and importance, which ultimately can escalate her self-esteem and self-respect.

Victoria, Anne, and Rebecca's accounts exemplified their unique need to experience a sense of belonging. Dryden & Spurling (1989) would acknowledge that certain inner wounds seem to lie specifically in their sense of separation and displacement from others. Dryden and Spurling (1989) would perceive Victoria's attempt to seek answers to her difficult relationships and experiences being conveyed with determination to eradicate her sense of isolation and to not repeat the inadequacies and shortcomings experienced in her childhood.

The participants' need to belong is a compelling force or attraction to seek intimate closeness with others in relationships. These participants strove to find that closeness with peers. Anne and Rebecca each possess a personal need to be surrounded by peers who sincerely understand them. As Anne and Rebecca were not working anymore their need to belong and to be understood was not being fulfilled.

Clary et al. (1998) would recognise that volunteering allows significant others to perceive Anne and Rebecca's volunteer work positively. Their peers can understand and appreciate them and their actions. They can accept them as individuals encompassing their genuine qualities and attributes. Rebecca went on to describe the richness of working with her fellow volunteers. She explained that the organisation is characterised by individuals who are similar in many ways and share various characteristics, desires and aims. These commonalities allow Anne and Rebecca to connect with their fellow volunteers. Accordingly they can feel like a significant part of the organisation. Meyer and Allen (1991) would acknowledge that the participants' commitment to the organisation is linked to the beliefs, viewpoints and attitudes which they share with the organisation.

Kohlberg (1969, cited in Krebs, 1978) would recognise that Anne and Rebecca generally conform and intensify social acceptance and approval. He would recognise that Anne and Rebecca might have lost their self-centredness in order to further the well-being of society. Furthermore, Kohlberg's theory would acknowledge that Rebecca is at times inclined to place the well-being of society above the well-being of her friends and family (Krebs, 1978). Rebecca's stance of external observation, of looking in from the outside, can become recognised as a customary way in which one sees one's self and relations with others (Dryden & Spurling, 1989).

Puka (1994) would acknowledge that Victoria, Anne, and Rebecca are altruists as they have gone through a stage of self-exploration and subsequently achieved a significant amount of self-understanding. Rebecca's central motivating drive, according to the cognitive development approach to altruism, is her inclination to grow. Schindler-Rainman and Lippitt (1971, p. 51) would acknowledge that Victoria, Anne, and Rebecca are 'self-actualisers' as they perceive opportunities for learning, personal growth and development. Dryden and Spurling (1989) would deem that counselling, for Rebecca, is a personal journey towards health and stability.

3.3.3.2. A Sense of Thankfulness

While Victoria, Anne, and Rebecca shared the experience of feeling a sense of isolation, Kate, Dulce, and Christine on the other hand, did not experience such a sense. The content of their life narratives revealed that they felt a part of their families. These participants shared the similarity of experiencing a profound amount of gratitude for their life outcomes. Hearing the problems of others allows these participants to feel thankful for their families and life outcomes. This thankfulness is triggered by the realisation that they are not exposed to the problems that some individuals in society are enduring.

Kate, Dulce, and Christine's traumatic past triggered their appreciation for their present. Kate went through a traumatic period in her life when her husband had a lung operation. The support of her family provided her with the strength and faith. Her description of this event indicated an enormous amount of gratitude for her husband's recovery.

Dulce described her gratefulness for life and for her family throughout her life narrative. She constantly showed appreciation for her life even if the life outcomes were not beneficial or were detrimental to her as an individual. Counselling allows her to continuously acknowledge and realise how privileged and 'fortunate' she has been in her life. Dulce described how counselling individuals in crisis has made her aware of the silent emotional suffering of society. She explains her awareness:

"You feel that all the time you never knew all the hurt that's out there, you never. Because you're in your little cocoon and you're doing things and your children are happy and you don't realise the need out there. And that is what makes you want to do more. It makes you want to help more."

Christine and Dulce described how hearing the problems and traumas of others escalates their gratitude that they presently have 'good' lives consisting of no traumatic experiences and events. They feel blessed and fortunate to be able to lead a pleasant life filled with happiness and joy. Christine explains her gratitude:

"But when somebody walks in here and this person tells you I don't know where my next plate of food is going to come from. You feel so blessed when you go home. Thinking shu,

I really should count my blessings. So in that sense, you know, it's rewarding for me and it helps me. It humbles me."

Kate and Christine's awareness of the repercussions of traumatic experiences escalates their thankfulness. Their way of showing their appreciation is by providing help to individuals who are presently enduring traumatic experiences. Providing support to others is their way of revealing their appreciation for their families and present lives. By doing so they can express their gratitude for the way their lives have transpired. It is their way of giving back to society and saying thank you. Christine explains:

"Because I've got a good husband. I've got a good life. My husband is not abusing me and I've got a good life. So the least I can do is now give back and then work with women, you know, that are abused."

Wuthnow (1995) would see that reciprocity is an influencing factor in Kate, Dulce, and Christine becoming volunteers. Christensen et al. (1999) would concur that Kate, Christine, and Dulce became volunteers in order to fulfil their desire to give back to their community. They value helping others as they acknowledge the significance of being helped in the past and/or the importance of their families. Their focus is not paying back the particular individuals who were the source of their received support and kindness. They have learnt that the kindness they have received can be repaid by helping others.

Wuthnow (1995) would also see that Kate, Dulce, and Christine might have felt compelled to give back the good fortune they have experienced. However, they acknowledge that real needs are being served and the pleasure and fulfillment they obtain in return. The moral development theory would acknowledge that the belief 'do unto others as you would have them do unto you' is adopted by these participants (Krebs, 1978, p. 155). The kindness that they received can be reimbursed by helping others.

Clary et al. (1998) would recognise that Kate, Christine, and Dulce became volunteers in order to decrease their guilt of being more privileged than others in terms of life outcomes and life experiences. Hoffman (1982, cited in Van Hesteren, 1992) would acknowledge that the phenomenon of experiencing existential guilt underlies their altruistic behaviour. Their high level of empathic abilities and compassion for individuals' general problems may result from a combination of empathic suffering and the awareness of being in a relatively advantageous

position in relation to the client. Furthermore, their empathic reaction to individuals' general problems is transformed into guilt since they are highly motivated to keep with the altruistic requirements. They must take responsibility in a way that is consistent with the personality ideal if they want to maintain their sense of integrity as moral individuals.

By listening to the problems of individuals Kate, Christine, and Dulce feel that they want to give more of themselves to others. Assisting individuals enriches them. It satisfies an egoistic need as counselling others makes them feel worthy and valuable. Dulce explains:

"And only by holding that person's hand that moral support you give makes you really realise that all the time in your life you've been mothering your children, you've been mothering your husband but there are people that also need that little bit of love. And that is what makes you want to go out there all the time."

Dulce described how it is a huge sense of fulfillment when she holds someone's hand and alerts the individual that there is 'light at the end of the tunnel'. Maslow (1954, cited in Lazarus, 1980) would recognise that the highest need level of self-actualisation is being fulfilled. The participants need the complete fulfillment of themselves, which is the biggest accomplishment and acknowledgment of their capabilities (Lawless, 1979).

Omoto et al. (2000) would see that Kate, Dulce, and Christine became volunteers in order to satisfy their concern with fulfilling responsibilities or commitments to society. According to Schindler-Rainman and Lippitt (1971, p. 51) these participants would be recognised as 'servers' as they seek out opportunities for meaningful contributions. According to moral development theory, Kate, Dulce, and Christine possess altruistic concerns for the preservation of society. Furthermore, the theory would recognise that their altruistic motivations do not show higher levels of moral reasoning, but simply particular desires to go "beyond the call of duty, perhaps even beyond the call of morality" (Kohlberg, 1969, cited in Krebs, p. 317). Their altruistic behaviour is not required and mandatory. If the obligation to help others exists, then it is an obligation to go beyond the call of justice, and Kohlberg argues that a great deal of altruistic behaviour is required by justice. It is then an obligation of compassion in some reserved form. Puka (1994) would see that Kate, Dulce, and Christine's behaviour serves the principal interest of others, primarily as the means of valuing or caring for others.

3.3.3.3. Loss of Employment

A significant theme during adulthood revolved around how the loss of employment influenced their motivation to become counsellors. Rebecca, Dulce, Victoria, Kate, Anne, and Christine each described how the loss of employment affected them.

Rebecca's narrative focused on the distress and confusion which she experienced when she took early retirement. She realised that she was in fact not prepared for the repercussions of her decision. Rebecca explains her difficulty:

"I must say now that was a huge identity crisis, I think for me, because I'd been dying to get out and rest and sleep in, in the morning. And then when it happened I didn't really want it because I was fit and young still...But I was very fit and involved and all of a sudden there was this huge gap."

After Dulce was retrenched she stayed at home for a period of time which generated a sense of emptiness in her life. She described that she felt as if she was squandering valuable time and this compelled her to do something more constructive. Dulce explains:

"There are so many times that you've got wasted times on your hands. You won't admit it to a person. But you watch 'Days of our lives', 'Bold and Beautiful', you watch 'Isidingo', you watch 'Generations' when you are not worrying about the family. You sit there and you watch all these things. And what is it actually doing to you...You look at soapies and you see this one doing that but you don't realise that it's happening, really happening to people in reality...And that actually makes you feel that you have done something with time that would have been wasted. So it really enriches you."

Victoria and Kate similarly described how their loss of employment caused them to feel disconnected from society. They both shared the need to adopt additional skills in order to help people in crisis. Victoria stopped working after an overseas holiday which activated a new energy and belief in herself. This triggered the motivation to study psychology which she has been doing for the last four years. Ceasing to work caused Victoria to feel disengaged from society, as she had become accustomed to having contact with people. This was exacerbated by the fact that she was studying from home which generated a void in her life.

By becoming a counsellor she was able to have the interpersonal contact which she desired and in addition was able to achieve the practical experience. Victoria explains:

"I enjoy studying but not all the time. I like a balance. I don't just want to be a hermit. I want a bit of people contact. I also feel that while I'm doing this other stuff it's getting experience."

Subsequent to the birth of Kate's third child, she felt that she needed to work again, as she was bored of having the same routine. She thus started to assist in the management of organisations. Kate realised that becoming a counsellor was an opportunity for her to enhance her skills and on a personal note, reach her full potential. Doing the courses and becoming a counsellor has had a valuable impact on her.

Anne and Christine gave up their careers in order to become full-time mothers. Anne explained that while motherhood was the primary reason for this decision, she also found that nursing was not personally fulfilling her in the way that it initially did. Christine described how her decision to cease working generated certain difficulties for her as it felt as if she had lost her independence. Christine explains:

"Giving up this lifestyle of going to work and my independence, it was the loss of my independence."

Through Anne and Christine's narrative of their adulthood they reminisced about the joys of motherhood and family life. However, as their children grew older and less reliant on them, they ceased to feel fulfilled. Anne revealed her awareness of not wanting to live her life through her children. She describes this awareness:

"I needed to have my own identity... So I knew I needed to get something going for myself where I would be fulfilled and not being fulfilled through my children."

Anne described that solely being a mother was causing her inner self to deteriorate. Her loss of employment and most importantly being disconnected from a caring profession caused feelings of unfulfillment. Anne needed to re-enter the caring profession where she could experience the individual contact she cherished so much. Anne and Christine enrolled for counselling courses in order to gain a sense of fulfillment.

Rebecca, Dulce, Victoria, Kate, Anne, and Christine each described how their loss of employment was a deciding factor in them becoming volunteers. Omoto et al. (2000) would see that the participants' departure from the working world caused them to lose their occupational function that provided them with valuable connections to their community. Losing this function in society subjected them to feelings of worthlessness and uselessness. The presence of free time and possible feelings of worthlessness escalated their need and desire to want to help others. Volunteerism has allowed the participants to achieve a sense of meaning and purpose in society. Christensen et al. (1999) would see that volunteering also allows these participants to feel a sense of worth.

McGuckin (1998) would see that retirement for Rebecca has been a harsh change from engagement to disengagement. Furthermore, he would see that Rebecca has found it difficult to adapt from being productive to not being active at all. In addition, she became attentive of her need to be involved in something meaningful. Her retirement thus caused her altruistic motive to intensify. She described that the appeal to do volunteer work was perplexing as the period of contemplation of whether to do the counselling course was long.

Wuthnow (1995) would acknowledge that Rebecca's participation in counselling is fulfilling her desire to feel appreciated. He would also note that the older participants are likely to learn that their self-confidence increases. McGuckin (1998) would similarly recognise that these participants are probably experiencing increased self-esteem and regenerated feelings of health and vitality, and new and rewarding social relationships with peers.

Due to retirement or retrenchment the participants lost the contact with the community that they previously enjoyed. Losing this connection to society caused a void in their lives. The desire for social contact existed throughout the participants' life histories. Christensen et al. (1999) and Clary et al. (1998) would recognise that the participants' action of volunteering is an opportunity to meet new people and create relationships with others. Grusec (1991) would perceive that the motivation underlying their altruistic acts are thus desires for social associations. Warburton and Terry (2000) and Omoto et al. (2000) would acknowledge that they were able to rekindle contact and establish the companionships, which they yearned for by being apart of the volunteer organisation.

Gidron (1978, in Clary & Snyder, 1991) would acknowledge that volunteering is a way that Rebecca, Dulce, Victoria, Kate, Anne, and Christine can fulfil their need for social contact and maintain contact with the community. Mueller (1975, cited in Unger, 1991, p. 72) would see that they are actually 'paid' for their volunteer work by obtaining such social contact.

Victoria, Kate, and Rebecca described their need to obtain the necessary skills to help people in need. Victoria explains this need:

"And I think that my motivation was to know more and to become more skilled and not causing more problems, but trying to be there as a support."

Rebecca described how she became aware that she needed to advance her skills due to her involvement in 'incredibly delicate situations.' Clary et al. (1998) would see that volunteering serves the function of obtaining and practicing skills and abilities. Clary et al. (1998) would recognise that these participants have the need for enhancement. A function possibly served by volunteering is the opportunity to experience new learnings and to practice skills and abilities.

It became evident why some participants decided to remain in the caregiving profession. A strong sense of continuity exists regarding Anne's need to select a caregiving profession. The cognitive development approach to altruism would propose that Anne's level of cognitive moral structure radically influenced her choices and actions (Puka, 1994). Zagier Roberts (1994) would argue that the decisions she makes concerning which profession to train for are strongly influenced by her need to deal with unresolved issues of her past. Anne described that being a caregiver escalates her feelings of self-worth. These feelings are the primary motive in her wanting to become a caregiver. Through counselling she is able to make a difference. It is evident that counselling has egoistically fulfilled her as it has fulfilled her spiritually and emotionally. Anne explains:

"It's something that I have to do otherwise my spirit doesn't feel complete."

3.3.3.4. Innate Listening Skill

The common thread of being a sensitive and attentive listener was noted to exist between all the participants. According to Nelson-Jones (1992) the ability and capacity to be a good, attentive and understanding listener is the most essential and fundamental helping skill. Each participant possessed an innate skill of being able to listen attentively and empathically to others. This became apparent through their description of their skills. The awareness of their skills occurred in their adult lives. Some participants' described how other individuals would make them aware of their skill while others noted their own awareness of their skill. The participants described how being attentive and empathic listeners influenced them to become counsellors.

Victoria and Christine's account of their traumatic life experiences signified their ability to compassionately connect with individuals in crisis. They both share the motivation and willingness to listen to the problems of individuals. Christine describes how her familiarity and understanding of traumatic experiences shaped her ability to empathically listen to others:

"And I just feel that my experiences, by what I have experienced in my life I can maybe help somebody else. Maybe just by being there and listening."

Victoria and Anne's insight to their ability to listen assiduously to others resulted from their acquired psychological knowledge. Victoria wanted to become a counsellor in order to develop this innate skill. Anne began to recognise her skill through the counselling courses she completed. The recognition of her skill was also made by significant others who compelled her to recognise her ability to connect with individuals in a caring manner. Anne explains:

"And everyone always sort of said, you know, you are so sort of caring and loving. I've always been a people's person. I've always been able to relate to people. I've been a better listener...I mean people have naturally always felt a lot comfortable speaking to me."

Significant others have similarly conveyed the valuable caring relations that Rebecca and Dulce have with people. As these participants had caring qualities and skills they were approached by others to do the counselling courses offered by the organisation.

Dulce described the persuasion by her sister to complete these courses:

"She said you are so good to people and you always got to people that are dying. If you hear people are in hospital you want to go. If I hear somebody that I don't know has passed away I will go to the funeral. She said to me you are always doing this."

Kate continuously noticed that people would have the tendency to talk to her about their problems. This recurrence became an influential sign to become a counsellor.

"So I just thought here is the chance where I can sort of go into this and really become something and to go for the training where I can enhance this."

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CHAPTER 4:

CONCLUSION

4.1. Introduction

The findings of the study will be reviewed and explored by relating the findings to other pertinent studies. The discussion will focus on the commonalities and differences that exist between this study and other studies. Relevant literature will also be used to give meaning to the results. Recommendations will be made for improving the quality of counselling that is rendered by lay counsellors. Limitations of the study will be discussed and recommendations for future research will be provided.

4.2. Motivation in the Context of the Participants' Lives

The altruism-egoism debate centres around whether the motivations underlying the caring act are ever truly altruistic or egoistic. It was noted that Clary and Snyder (1999) perceived the debate as consisting of two contrasting arguments. The one being that all caring behaviour is motivated by an unselfish desire to help others and secondly that all caring behaviour is motivated by a personal need to fulfil one's self. This study attempted to respond to the debate and ascertain whether a helpful act can be based solely on a general concern for others or on general concern for the self.

Ilsey and Niemi (1981) saw the need to establish whether volunteers possess many diverse motives. Findings in this study coincide with the findings of a study conducted by Clary and Snyder (1999). Both studies regard the significance of the findings, which evidently reveals the 'multimotivational nature of volunteering' (Clary & Snyder, 1999, p. 157). Volunteers therefore attempt to fulfil diverse goals. This study recognised that the participants possessed a combination of complementary motives. Their desire to volunteer is influenced by both types of motives. The participants' motivations cannot be classified as either altruistic or egoistic.

The analysis of the interview data revealed that the two motivations could coincide with the other. All six participants were motivated by both egoistic and altruistic needs. The purpose of volunteerism was very similar to the findings of a study conducted by Omoto et al. (2000). The two purposes for volunteerism were interpersonal purposes and societal ones. Individuals became volunteers in order to satisfy either a concern with formulating relationships with others or a concern for fulfilling commitments to society. The participants therefore had the desire to volunteer in order to help others and accordingly help themselves. The results of this study also correlate with the findings of the studies of Clary and Snyder (1999) and Anderson and Moore (1978, cited in Clary & Snyder, 1991). Both studies obtained numerous motivations for volunteering, which incorporated both egoistic and altruistic reasons.

Three egoistic needs were identified: The needs of the wounded healer, a need for self-fulfillment, and a need for personal companionship. Three out of the six participants were recognised as wounded healers. The three participants were motivated to become volunteers in order to relate to their past experiences. Zagier Roberts (1994), Gibson et al. (2002), and Miller and Baldwin (1987) provided theoretical frameworks to understand the phenomenon of the wounded healer. Zagier Robert (1994) and Miller and Baldwin (1987) would see that the participants' inner wounds played a part in them deciding to become counsellors. Gibson et al. (2002) would acknowledge that volunteering satisfies the participants' strong personal need to deal with their past events and experiences. Similarly, Zagier Roberts (1994) would acknowledge that relating to this need to deal with their past is the drive to effect reparation. Through repairing others they are able to unconsciously repair themselves.

The study also revealed the importance of past relationships on the participants' lives. Merodoulaki (1994, cited in Holmes, 1999) would acknowledge that the relationship between and with parents in childhood was an important influential factor in the participants becoming volunteers. Victoria's physical abuse and depression, Anne's difficult family dynamics, and Christine's sexual abuse and abortion were painful past events that needed to be dealt with. Their traumatic past influenced their current motivations to become volunteer counsellors. By helping others they are consequently able to help themselves. Victoria, Anne, and Christine are able to understand and overcome their painful past relationships that has engulfed them. These participants therefore became wounded healers. Through helping others they can deal with their difficult past. Their past consisting of emotional or physical pain, difficulties, and/or traumas influenced their motivation to become caregivers and thereby equipped them

to connect with their distressing past. The link between the participants' past and present of their lives were thus discerned. It is evident that their past shaped their principal egoistic motivation to deal with their past.

Five out of the six participants had the egoistic need to be self-fulfilled. Counselling individuals in crisis allows them to be individually satisfied. Knowing that they are making differences in people's lives is hugely gratifying and rewarding. Volunteering possibly improves the psychological well-being of the participants. Krause, Herzog and Baker (1992, cited in Omoto et al., 2000) would see that their volunteer activity is probably linked with better physical health and psychological functioning.

All the participants expressed the egoistic need for companionship, which they lost when they stopped working. The participants were able to rekindle the interpersonal contact by becoming volunteers. The findings of this study concurred with the findings of a study conducted by Warburton and Terry (2000). Findings showed that social relations were principal concerns in the participants' decision to become volunteers. A study conducted by Omoto et al. (2000) concluded that older adults are less likely to be motivated to engage in volunteerism for reasons other than to obtain friends or to lessen their loneliness. In contrast, Clary and Snyder (1991) found that older volunteers were to some degree likely to consider volunteering as a way of maintaining contact with their community. The findings of this study related to the findings of the latter study. Older adults received satisfaction from their work to the extent that relationships were established.

Omoto et al. (2000) would agree that ceasing to work caused the participants to lose their role in the community. Not playing a constructive part in society probably caused the participants to experience feelings of worthlessness and unimportance. Helping others allows the participants to feel that they are doing something beneficial in society. Their desire to volunteer probably derived from their need to feel useful and needed in society.

Clary and Snyder (1991) identified that the volunteers in numerous studies reported the importance of altruism. The participants of this study similarly reported the significance of altruism. Mueller (1975, cited in Unger, 1991, p. 72) would see that the participants are 'paid' when their altruistic motivation is fulfilled. The participants bear the costs of volunteering in exchange for their individual profits. The participants were altruistically motivated to become

volunteer counsellors in order to help individuals in need. The past that they endured created an altruistic desire to help others. For example, Anne's childhood and adolescence generated the caring nature that she possessed. Similarly, Dulce's past responsibilities generated her altruistic nature. The participants' past shaped their current motivation to altruistically help individuals in similar situations.

The participants who were wounded healers also possessed an unselfish need to help others. Victoria and Christine had the personal need to help others who are experiencing similar traumas that they experienced. Frank and Paris (1987) would perceive that Victoria and Christine are individuals who have known and convey the wounds of psychological pain and are thereby able to exclusively understand the pain in others. Jacobs (1991) would acknowledge the ceaseless interaction between the past and present lives of these participants, as it became evident that there is an interaction between the relationships and events of the participants' past and their motivations.

Each participant described their traumatic experiences during adolescence. Due to the participants dealing with numerous traumas they are able to connect with individuals they counsel in a unique and certain way. They have the understanding of where they are coming from and what they are enduring. Experiencing traumas in their life has provided them with an altruistic nature comprising of genuine feelings of compassion and understanding.

It was discovered that the participants possessed more egoistic reasons influencing their participation than altruistic ones. Rubin and Thorelli's study (1991, cited in Clary & Snyder, 1991) discovered that the duration of involvement is connected to the number of egoistic reasons influencing participation in volunteer work. The participants did, however, report more altruistic reasons for their participation. This result is similar to the result of a study conducted by Clary and Orenstein (1991, cited in Clary & Snyder, 1991) which discovered that volunteer counsellors who ended their involvement prematurely reported less altruistic reasons for volunteering. The commitment of the participants of this study can be deemed to be more extensive as they reported more altruistic motives but unconsciously possessed more egoistic ones.

Dryden and Spurling (1989) would see that some of the participants remain caregivers in order to carry on healing from their past. According to Miller and Baldwin (1987) the paradox

of one who heals and yet remains wounded applies to Christine, Victoria, and Anne. Their altruistic desire to continue to help others is driven by their unrelenting egoistic need to deal with their past. All the participants have the need to help others deal with their traumas in order for them to continuously heal, learn and grow. Clary et al. (1998) would see that this need to grow corresponds with the fifth function of volunteering. This function involves a motivational function that focuses on the growth and development of the participants' egos.

This study has attempted to answer why individuals become volunteers and what maintains their voluntary work. On the whole the study attempted to reveal whether there was an interaction between the participants' past and present lives and how the past managed to serve their present. More specifically the study tried to discover how past life experiences affect current motivations. It wanted to explore how past relationships and experiences could be a powerful and compelling influence in becoming a counsellor.

This study aimed to encapsulate the voices, emotions, behaviours and actions of the participants (Denzin, 1989). The distinctive characteristics of volunteerism as voluntary, persistent and incessant helpfulness showed that it was valuable to subscribe to a motivational perspective. The psychodynamic approach was adopted to question the motivations that could influence individuals to seek volunteer activities, and to commit themselves to voluntary helping. By using this theory the fundamental aim of seeing how the participants' past may influence their current motivations was achieved.

The interest has been in what is common to the participants' accounts rather than with how they differ from each other. The discussion of the results attempted to give a voice to the participants. It aimed to remain within the spirit of the real value of the narratives and aimed to provoke others to think about their needs and desires to become counsellors and their development, growth and maturity through counselling. The findings of the study do indicate that individuals' motivations for becoming involved in volunteer work are very likely to be complex.

4.3. Recommendations

The problem of volunteers ceasing their commitment to organisations frequently occurs. A possible reason why volunteers depart from the organisation is that their motivations are not salient or fulfilling as before. I will present numerous suggestions, which may assist the organisation to amplify and perpetuate the motivation of its counsellors. These recommendations could lead to a decrease in the annual drop-out rate.

As the survival of NGO's relies on its volunteers, it is essential for organisations to comprehend the motivation of its counsellors. It is necessary to understand how past life experiences can influence and facilitate current motivations to become counsellors. It is also imperative for NGO's to comprehend the motivations that sway older people's decisions to volunteer as the greater proportion of volunteers are older adults.

This study showed that individuals are drawn to the organisation in order to fulfil their personal needs. The desire to fulfil their egoistic and altruistic needs should be recognised by the organisation as influencing their motivation. Advertising to attract individuals to the organisation should include both these needs, as this study showed that these two needs co-exist side by side.

The individual connection to the work that caregivers have is valuable as it provides them with the capability to empathise with the emotions of the clients and to understand how they may be experiencing specific things. The organisation can design programmes or workshops in order to make the counsellors' motivations transparent. This study hoped to reveal the motivations, distresses and vulnerabilities to the counsellors of the organisation. This exposure will permit them to understand the rationale behind their motivation of being care workers. Acquiring this understanding could ultimately allow them to counsel more effectively. An enhanced awareness of the counsellors' motivation could empower them to generate the best possible use of their own knowledge and experience to counsel others. This could escalate or perpetuate the motivation of the counsellors.

4.4. Limitations of the Study

The life history interviews relied on the retrospective accounts that participants provided. These accounts may not be accurate as recollections can change over time. According to Flick (1998) factual experiences may not be expressed fully as the participants may not be able to express the experiences or events as they actually occurred or the participants may not be able to remember the experiences or events as they really happened. This may lead to memories being recreated. In addition current feelings, motivations and perceptions can distort memories. As life histories are frequently autobiographical as well as biographical, the problems of truth and bias create some shortcomings of using this technique. This issue could weaken the internal validity of the study.

Marshall and Rossman (1999) consider the main limitation of the narrative approach to be its deficiency of generalisation. Participants were recruited from regional branches of a voluntary counselling organisation. Results are thus not generalisable to the wider population of voluntary counsellors. Six participants were randomly selected from a list of the volunteers of the organisation. However, the limited sample size could not be fully representative of the list from which the interview sample was drawn. These issues could weaken the external validity of the study.

4.5. Suggestions for Future Research

The following suggestions could be regarded as refinements or ways to extend this study:

As NGO's consist of volunteers of different ages it is suggested that future studies consider chronological age as a variable that influences the motivation of counsellors. Sampling can stratify the groups according to different ages prior to analysing the data. These studies can examine the motivations of volunteers of different ages and determine if their motivations differ.

The counsellors' length of involvement in the organisation can also be analysed. The commitment to the organisation could provide an in-depth understanding of their motivations.

This study showed that past experiences may influence current motivations. This reveals the developmental and progressive nature of volunteer motivation as motivation changes over time. A longitudinal study could be conducted, which could trace the development of the counsellors' motivation from the time they enter the organisation until they cease their commitment.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A:

CONSENT FORM

“Motivation in the context of the life history of volunteer counsellors”

The following information is provided for you to determine whether you wish to participate in this particular study. You should be aware that you are free to choose whether or not to participate or to withdraw at any time. The aim of this study is to obtain a holistic understanding of the counsellors’ motivation by tracing the life events and experiences that have influenced the participants’ decision to become volunteer counsellors and to remain as one.

Do not hesitate to ask any questions about the study either before, during, or after participating in the study. Your name will not be associated with the research findings in any way and only the researcher will know your identity as a participant. Therefore, confidentiality is ensured. There are no known risks and/or discomforts associated with this study. The expected benefits associated with your participation in this study are helping provide information about the experiences of being a volunteer counsellor at the organisation, which fundamentally relies on its volunteers. This information may be helpful for the organisation to understand its members more efficiently and provide changes that may benefit volunteers. Data collection will involve conducting two interviews. The duration of the first interview shall be approximately 90 minutes. The results shall be presented in a follow-up interview which shall last approximately 30 minutes. In this interview you will be given the opportunity to review the results and provide feedback.

Please sign your consent with full knowledge of the nature and purpose of the procedures.
A copy of this consent form will be given to you to keep.

Signature of the participant

Date

APPENDIX B:

PROMPTS FOR THE LIFE HISTORY INTERVIEWS

- Description of childhood (experiences and events).
So what was your childhood like?
- Description of adolescent years (experiences and events).
Tell me about your teenage years?
- Description of education history (experiences and events).
Primary school, Junior school, High school, Tertiary education
So what was it like for you at school?
- Description of adulthood (experiences and events).
Describe your adult years?
- *Give an account of your working career* (experiences and events).
- *Describe certain key events in your life history* (peak experiences and low experiences).
- *Describe the memorable moments in your life history.*
- *Describe the significant people in your life and your relationships with them.*
What influence do they have on you today?
- *Give an account of your motivation throughout your life, in particular to become a volunteer counsellor and to remain as one.*